

# NATIONAL REVIEW

SIXTIETH-ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

LET'S FACE IT: UNLIKE VIENNA, IT SEEMS  
ALTOGETHER POSSIBLE THAT DID *NATIONAL REVIEW* NOT  
EXIST, NO ONE WOULD HAVE INVENTED IT. THE LAUNCHING  
OF A CONSERVATIVE WEEKLY JOURNAL OF OPINION IN  
A COUNTRY WIDELY ASSUMED TO BE A BASTION OF  
CONSERVATISM AT FIRST GLANCE LOOKS LIKE A WORK  
OF SUPEREROGATION, RATHER LIKE PUBLISHING A ROYALIST  
WEEKLY WITHIN THE WALLS OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE.  
IT IS NOT THAT, OF COURSE; IF *NATIONAL REVIEW* IS  
SUPERFLUOUS, IT IS SO FOR VERY DIFFERENT  
REASONS: IT STANDS ATHWART HISTORY, YELLING STOP,  
AT A TIME WHEN NO ONE IS INCLINED TO DO SO, OR TO  
HAVE MUCH PATIENCE WITH THOSE WHO SO URGE IT.

Elliott Abrams • Richard Brookhiser • Arthur C. Brooks • Christopher Buckley • Orson Scott Card  
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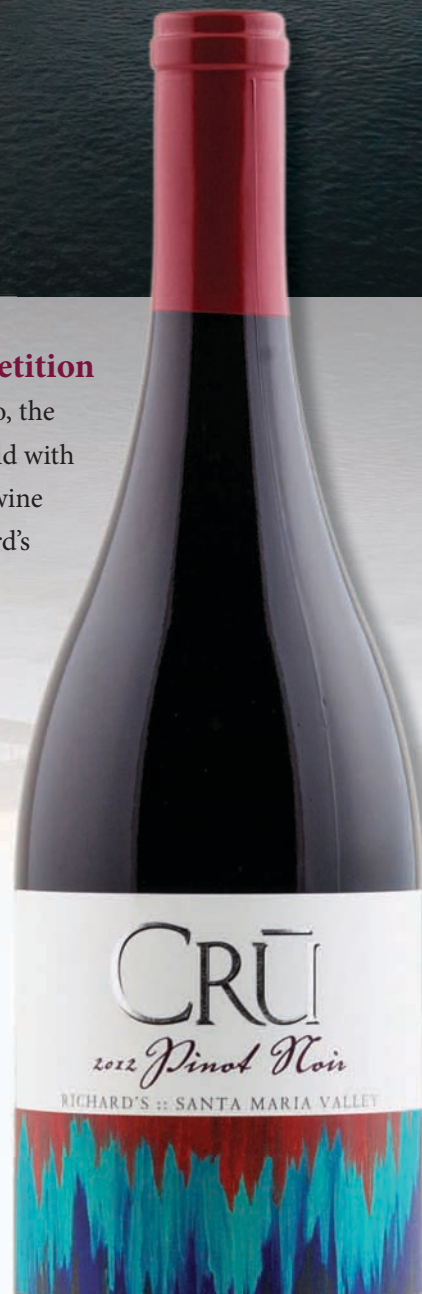
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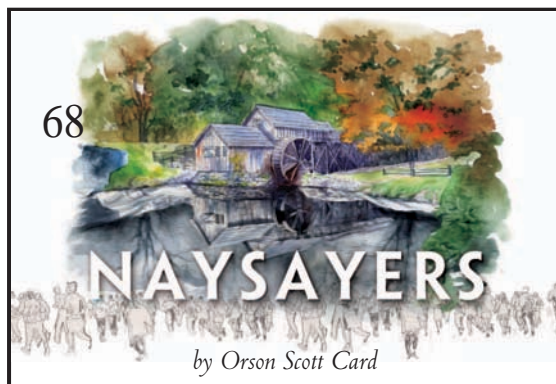
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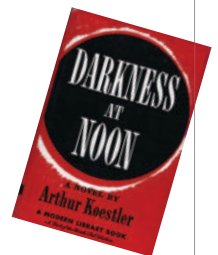
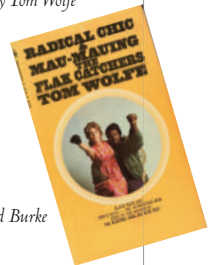
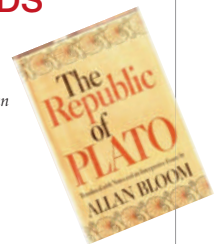
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# Thankful at Sixty

IF memory serves, I first heard about NATIONAL REVIEW watching *Firing Line* in the 1980s. I went down to the local drugstore looking for a copy, and to my chagrin it carried *The New Republic*, not NR. I had to resort to my high-school library, where they had copies in those old hard vinyl binders. The first issue I remember had a cover story on the Kissinger Commission on Central America (not exactly the most alluring subject matter).

As was the case for so many of our readers (some of them share their stories of their first copy of the magazine in this issue), NR was an education. An earnestly active reader, I underlined what seemed the most important bits. Whenever I didn't understand something, I took it as a challenge, not an affront. I used NR as a bibliography for a conservative education, finding my way to Henry Hazlitt, C. S. Lewis, Whittaker Chambers, and others through its pages.

I kept each issue as if it were a collectible and steadily built my pile of NRs. We occasionally get calls from subscribers who have done the same thing and ask whether we have some use for the years' worth of issues they have accumulated. (In case you are wondering: If they are from before 2000, yes, we do.)

For me, and for so many of you, NR is more than a magazine. It is a cause and a community. With this issue, we mark 60 years of our joint enterprise, undertaken with you, our readers.

We interrupt our regularly scheduled programming—this issue has no Week, no columns, and no book reviews—to mark the occasion with dozens of interesting and brilliant people writing about our civilization and our politics, as well as their own intellectual development.

If there is a sense of being embattled to much of it, that's to be expected. Our situation isn't as dire as it was in the Cold War, when we were facing down nuclear-armed totalitarianism, but it is dire in different ways. Liberty, the rule of law, and high cultural standards aren't inevitable or even natural, at least to judge by the experience of most of human history, and will always be under threat from enemies foreign and domestic.

Our defense of them should be high-spirited—always clear-eyed, but never depressive. Bill Buckley liked to say that to despair is a sin.

One of his most important themes was gratitude. This is as good a time as any for me to express some of my own: Thank-you to all of you for reading, and—to many of you—for contributing above and beyond the price of a subscription to keep us afloat; thank-you to all of our editors and other staff, who make it possible to put the magazine to bed fortnightly and publish constantly online; thank-you to our publisher, Jack Fowler, who has the heart of an angel and the accent of a cop from Bronx Precinct 52, and who has poured himself into NR for 25 years now; and thank-you to our writers—they have ensured that my education via the pages of NR has never ended.

When Bill Buckley was still with us, I made a point of occasionally dropping him a note thanking him for the privilege of editing his baby. You will sometimes hear sports enthusiasts say that when they get into sports as a profession—say, a baseball fan joins a team's front office—the game loses some of its charm. But I have never entirely lost the sense of wonder at this little magazine that I felt when I first discovered it decades ago.

—RICH LOWRY



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# Onward

SIXTY years ago, WFB said of this brand-new journal that it “stands athwart history, yelling Stop”—in the spirit not of a bearded zealot carrying a hand-lettered sign, but of serious advocates who had better ideas and practical suggestions for achieving them.

How much has been achieved. The Republican party, the all-too-human vessel of most conservative politicking, is more conservative than at any time since the 1920s, possibly more intelligent than at any time since the Civil War, and, in terms of offices held, in Congress and state capitals, impressively successful. In the world of high-end deep thinking, the aged economy envisaged by John Maynard Keynes is no longer the universally accepted ideal, and socialism is not the Great Good Place where economists keep their consciences.

Careful reasoning and painful experience have taught useful lessons. Most important, the Soviet Union and its Eastern European empire—what NR called back in 1955 “the century’s most blatant force of satanic utopianism”—is a memory, having ended even before the century did. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Lech Walesa, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin and John Paul II played major roles in this astonishing denouement. We played our own role, smaller but vital.

At 60, people start thinking of early retirement. NR does not have that luxury. Old challenges remain or have mutated, while new ones arise.

Because error is evergreen, the economics of Santa Claus still wins votes. As we go to press, one candidate in the Democratic presidential race calls himself a socialist while another smiles and calls herself progressive. Conservatives meanwhile must consider how a free society can find productive work for the mass of men and women who are not and never will be tech-savvy. Too many in the business community would say: Import foreign workers, who will labor for even less. But it is not an option for a republican citizenry.

There may be more freedom and variety at the heights of certain academic disciplines, but the mass of the teaching profession, from college on down, is in bondage to a crazed fission of sexual and racial favoritism. It uses the language of equality but seeks to create a patchwork of fiefdoms, like Bantustan in apartheid-era South Africa. Student debt may bring colleges down, but will the survivors in the rubble know better?

The election of a black president has done nothing for racial healing. The more Americans talk about race, the less they say. Even as the black population shrinks relative to the whole, it remains the political property of turf-protectors and hustlers while conservatives have hardly tried appealing to it (and who benefits, in the short run, is there?).

layboy magazine, two years our senior, announced that it will no longer run pictures of naked women. That is because doing so is now superfluous, the sexual revolution having become an empire, omnipresent and unshakeable. Neither culture nor law any longer respects the ideal that children deserve a father and a mother, and the Supreme Court has read the



We live in an age of faith. The Catholic Church has been energized by recent popes, and the worldwide Evangelical revival continues. (Mainline Protestant churches and Eastern Orthodoxy are less healthy, afflicted by liberalism and caesaro-papism prospectively.) Islam too partakes of the revival, in noxious fission, leaving a trail of corpses—most of them Christian—at its periphery, and—when Sunnis battle Shiites—within. Sectors of the Western world meanwhile give themselves to pseudo-religions—Earth worship and, among a handful of contrarians, the new atheism. Religious conflict is generally deadly, and the grace of God for both.

—The Editors

EDITOR'S NOTE: The next issue of NATIONAL REVIEW will appear in three weeks.





## A CLARION CALL:

### RE-INSTITUTE A NATIONAL STRATEGY AND POLICY OF "PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH"

#### A message from Brigadier General Donald B. Smith, U.S. Army (Ret.) and the American Security Council Foundation

A **Clarion Call** to arms to urge our national leaders to re-institute a national strategy of *Peace Through Strength*.

As we approach a very special time of year, which includes Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and the Hanukkah/Christmas holiday season, we should count our blessings that we live in the United States of America, the beacon of freedom, hope, and justice. Our quality of life and standard of living is the envy of the world. The United States is a 239-year-old experiment in democracy that has set the bar for the peaceful expression of human liberty. We have achieved this by adhering to the sacred principles laid down by our forefathers in our founding document, the Declaration of Independence, and our governing document, the United States Constitution.

However, as the Chairman of the Board of the American Security Council Foundation, I am deeply concerned that our beloved country is meandering down the wrong road. Our standard of living is sagging, and our freedoms are under increasing assault. People are losing faith in the government that has led us down this troubling path.

Let me share with you a few examples of why I am so concerned.

How can the United States turn its back on our greatest ally in the Middle East, Israel, and negotiate a fatally flawed nuclear deal with our greatest regional adversary, Iran, that puts our national security at risk and makes our people less safe?

How can the United States allow Russian President Vladimir Putin and the communist leadership of China assume preeminent roles in international relations, overshadowing U.S. global leadership?

How can a great nation continue to outlive its means to the extent that the national debt is approaching 20 trillion dollars?

How can the greatest country in the history of mankind cut its military strength to pre-World War II levels when the world is increasingly unstable and international terrorists are gaining more capability to commit acts of terror right here in our homeland?

"We the People" must take control of our country, stop apologizing for American exceptionalism, and reassert U.S. global leadership. We must set an example for other countries to join us in the fruits of a free market economy, while also building in safeguards to protect the less fortunate in our society.

The United States needs to stop apologizing and start leading. We must return to the strategy of *Peace Through Strength* under which Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush brought about the collapse of the Soviet Union and victory in the Cold War. We urgently need to reshape our foreign and defense policies based on the four pillars of economic strength, diplomatic strength, military strength, and moral leadership.

The American Security Council Foundation urges all Americans to contact their members of Congress and to remind them of the importance of a strong military. We must urge them to stop crippling defense cuts, and to take action to insure that the United States of America continues to foster the best equipped, the best trained and best led military in the entire world.

We urge you to join the American Security Council Foundation in reinstituting a national strategy and foreign policy of *Peace Through Strength*. America's best days can still be ahead of us, and the United States can remain the beacon of freedom, hope and justice for the entire world. Let's all work together to keep America free and strong!

**Approved by the Board of Directors of the American Security Council Foundation**

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YUVAL LEVIN

# Still Thwarting History



Text

**W**HEN he launched NATIONAL REVIEW 60 years ago, William F. Buckley Jr. famously declared an intention not to make history but to halt it. The magazine, he asserted, “stands athwart history, yelling stop.” We conservatives know this old quip so well that we rarely stop to take it seriously. And we know, too, that stopping the Left was never the sum of Buckley’s ambitions, and could never be enough for us. But although it was not all that modern conservatism was born to do, defying the notion that the arc of history bends left has always been an important part of our mission on the right, and it matters today as much as ever.

In the era of NR’s birth, conservatives confronted a liberalism that was insufferably arrogant in a particular way: It took itself to be in confident possession of the only reliable vision of the future and so to be working merely to hasten its inevitable vicissitudes. In 1955, this conceit still carried the unmistakable stench of its Marxist origins, and so still hinted, if vaguely, at a belated historical forces (with a capital “H”) that possessed their own independent trajectory. An immense array of ponderous pseudo-philosophical paraphernalia was still employed in the effort to make the case for such forces seem profound. And serious conservatives at mid century devoted much energy to combatting that lingering belief in determinism and the disdain it evinced for human liberty.

Six decades later, conservatives might be forgiven for imagining that at least that particular battle has been won. Communism is essentially extinguished, and almost no one outside the senior leadership of the British Labour party now admits to looking back upon it fondly. Precocious teenagers don’t impress one another by opining on false consciousness. Even in the most liberal precincts of the academy, earnest determinism has mostly been replaced by technocratic swagger or an easygoing decadence—serious but lesser vices. Frenchmen prophesying class conflict are still adored without being read, but surely “History” is no longer our nemesis.

And yet perhaps we shouldn’t be so sure. In America, where outright socialism (let alone Communism) never fully took root, the Left has long been essentially welfare-statist in practice, which means its confidence in history has not been about class struggle, exactly, but about a sense of where the relationship between the state and the people was headed. American liberals have long been guided, at least implicitly, by what we might now call the ideal of social democracy.

This ideal holds that the market economy must be meticulously managed by strict regulation and its consequences addressed by robust transfers. From birth to death, citizens should be ensconced in a series of protections and benefits: universal child care, universal health care, universal public schooling and higher education, welfare benefits for the poor, generous labor protections for workers, dexterous management of the levers of the economy to ease the cycles of boom and bust, skillful direction of public funds to spur private productivity and efficiency. Each will be overseen by a competent and rational bureaucracy, and the whole will make for a system that is not only beneficent but unifying and dignifying, and that enables the pursuit of common national goals while also liberating individuals from oppressive social strictures and from a crippling material dependence on family and community.

This vision has implicitly shaped our politics for most of the past century. Much of it has been enacted, but not all, and of course with decidedly mixed results. The Left has long acted on the premise that advocates of this view are, as liberals sometimes actually say, “on the right side of history,” and that steps along the social-democratic trajectory constitute progress while steps in any other direction amount to retrenchment.

Liberals have been in the habit of thinking this way for so long that many have come to take both the means and the ends of the social-democratic vision for granted and to defend our portly welfare state as though it were identical to the broad objectives it purports to advance. Policies that would employ any tools other than the national state are taken to be unserious about their own goals. As the health-care debate of the last few years has shown, when liberals listen to conservative proposals, they often don’t even hear an alternative—they just hear a “no” to their social-democratic vision and react accordingly.

This mode of judgment is implicit in a lot of media coverage of our policy debates, too. When liberal politicians propose to add some missing piece to the social-democratic puzzle—universal pre-school, for instance, or free college tuition—journalists tend to greet their proposals as logical



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next steps and the reactions of conservatives and the broader industrial giants and homogenizing mass media would require a public as a test of seriousness. government of large, bureaucratic institutions of administration.

But because the social-democratic vision blurs the distinction between means and ends, the Left advances an agenda that demands an extraordinary level of confidence in the competence of government yet does not defend that confidence. In fact, it generally does not advance an argument for itself at all. The American Left has long since settled into a comfortable blindness we now think about the future not in terms of consolidated insti-

## Conservatives will need to treat liberal claims to **spea** **for history and progress** with the contempt they deserve.

faith in its agenda, and the very absence of a theory of administration's expertly managing vast, uniform systems but in terms of decentralizing that agenda is sometimes offered as proof of decentralized networks' offering customized solutions while its pragmatism. remaining subject to individual choice. In the decades since the

Yet the prescriptions of our social democrats are far from end of World War II, our culture and economy have fractured, pragmatic. They call for centralized regulation and administration, liberalized, and decentralized. For good and bad, they are in- tion of vast swaths of American life, require public spending increasingly rooted in the ethic of expressive individualism and levels that are plainly unaffordable, and assume a degree of public the epistemology of distributed knowledge.

confidence in our national institutions that we have not seen in A politics that kept up with these changes would not attempt half a century. Indeed, this is what now stands out most about the social-democratic vision that implicitly guides the American Left: Although it offers itself as a vision of the future, it is an anachronism. It is how the past used to think about the future. that required great public trust in our institutions which

The social-democratic vision was born in the age of industrialization, when, in our economy and culture, everything was becoming bigger and more consolidated. It was only natural, a century ago, to think that an America increasingly dominated by and dissolving social norms. We are failing to do all of this, because the Left too often clings to the notion that the future must look like it did in the past and because the Right too often abides the idea that our political life is a recurring yes-or-no question about social democracy.

To do better, conservatives will need to treat liberal claims to speak for history and progress with the contempt they deserve: to mock them, as Buckley did, and to offer America a theoretical and practical alternative, as the magazine he founded has done for three score years. Conservatives today are uniquely well positioned to do this, since we incline to the dispersal of power, we value civil society's mediating institutions, and we harbor great skepticism about both centralization and hyper-individualism.

We have, in other words, the disposition toward government that underlies our constitutional system. Progressivism arose in opposition to that disposition and that system, which the Left believed were hopelessly out of date. But history, it turns out, has been kinder to this constitutional vision than to the confidence of the historicists. And a Constitution-minded conservatism therefore stands once again to be a force for modernization in American life through the reinvigoration of our system of government and the recovery of the insights and instincts that undergird it.

It is a modernization that America now badly needs, and toward which conservatives should now exert ourselves. Our chief obstacle will be progressives who stand athwart our path yelling "History!"

NR

### MY FIRST ISSUE OF NR

I first picked up a copy of NATIONAL REVIEW as a Cornell undergraduate, when I got sick of the rantings of my self-professed Marxist economics professor. (He also caused me to investigate the Chicago and the Austrian schools of economics.)

Finding NATIONAL REVIEW (and the NRulletin, which appeared between regular issues) did not help my grade-point average. I went to the library to read prior issues, beginning with Vol. 1, No. 1. When I resumed attending classes, up to date on NR, two weeks had passed, and I was behind in my courses. No permanent harm done, though; I still got into grad school (just barely).

Bill Buckley, Russell Kirk, and Will Herberg all visited the campus during my time there, and a local Young Americans for Freedom chapter was formed in response to the perceived stuffiness and ineffectiveness of "the gentlemen of the Right," i.e., the Cornell Conservative Club, which actually had tuxedo dinners with a guy playing Bach on the violin. Guys like me from East St. Louis felt a little out of place.

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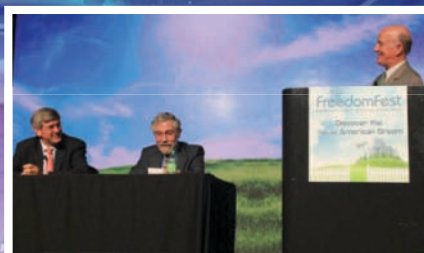
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CHARLES MURRAY

# The Regulators' Yoke



Text

**E**ARLIER this year, I published a book called “By the People” that laid out a plan for systematic civil disobedience of stupid and pointless regulations. It is in a subversive position. The rule of law is the foundation of freedom, because it is only through the rule of law that rights can be protected—a truth that John Locke stated with concision: “Wherever law ends, tyranny begins.” To advocate that we undermine the rule of law is a hairsbreadth from anarchy.

I have been led to this position by what I believe to be the truth about where America stands: The federal government is no longer “us” but “them.” It is no longer an extension of the people through their elected representatives. It is no longer a

republican bulwark against the arbitrary use of power. It has become an entity unto itself, separated from the American people and beyond the effective control of the political process. In this situation, the foundational principles of our nation come into play: The government does not command the blind allegiance of the citizenry. Government is instituted to protect our unalienable rights. The more destructive it becomes of those rights, the less it can call upon our allegiance.

I won’t try to lay out the whole case for concluding that the duty of allegiance has been radically diminished—that takes a few hundred pages. But let me summarize the ways in which the federal government has not simply become bigger and more intrusive since Bill Buckley founded *NATIONAL REVIEW*, but has also become “them,” and no longer an extension of “us.”

In 1955, the year *NATIONAL REVIEW* was born, the federal government’s domestic spending (i.e., the total budget minus spending on defense and interest on the national debt) came to \$187 billion in today’s dollars. It was a small amount, comparatively speaking—domestic spending in 2014 is budgeted at \$3 trillion. The Code of Federal Regulations had 17,989 pages in 1955, less than a tenth of the number of pages today. But the numbers do not begin to convey how small a role the federal government played in national life in 1955 compared with today. It had no role whatsoever in K–12 education and hardly any in higher education. It provided no support for and exerted no control over, state and local law enforcement. Federal policy toward the family? Toward the practice of religion? In 1955, the idea that the federal government could have “policies” on such topics didn’t occur to most Americans. To get a sense of how small a role the federal government still played in business as of 1955, consider that only a handful of corporations maintained any sort of presence in Washington, D.C.

But even though the actual role of the federal government remained limited, its potential power had already been unleashed in ways that could not be reversed. In a handful of landmark decisions from 1937 to 1942, the Supreme Court did not merely nudge the limits of government power. It erased some of the most crucial boundaries.

In 1937 *Helvering v. Davis* explicitly held that the federal government could spend money on the “general welfare,” establishing that the government’s powers were not limited to those enumerated in the Constitution. In 1938 *Carter v. United States* did what the Ninth Amendment had been intended to prevent—it limited the rights of the American people to those explicitly mentioned in the Constitution and its amendments. Making matters worse, the Court also limited the circumstances under which it would protect even those explicitly mentioned rights. In 1942 *Wickard v. Filburn* completed the reinterpretation of “commerce” so that the commerce clause became a license for the federal government to do anything it felt like.

Momentous as these decisions were, they were arguably not so crucial to the evolution of the federal government as the decisions that led to the regulatory state. Until the 1930s, a body of jurisprudence known as the “nondelegation doctrine” had put strict limits on how much power Congress could delegate to the executive branch. The agencies of the executive branch obviously had

*Mr. Murray is the W. H. Brady Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. This essay draws on his book *By the People: Rebuilding Liberty without Permission*.*



to be given some latitude to interpret the text of legislation years making a government salary into big bucks by but Congress was required to specify an “intelligible principle” whenever it passed a law that gave the executive power to work as a lobbyist. *American government isn't supposed to work this way.*

a new task. In 1943 *National Broadcasting Co. v. United States* dispensed with that requirement, holding that it was okay for Congress to tell the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to write regulations for radio licenses “as public convenience, interest, or necessity requires”—an undefined, and hence unintelligible, principle. And so we now live in a world in which Congress passes laws with grandiose goals, loosely defined, and delegates responsibility for interpreting those goals exclusively to regulatory agencies that have no accountability to the citizenry and only limited accountability to the president of the United States.

The de facto legislative power delegated to regulatory agencies is only one aspect of their illegitimacy. Citizens have not been hit with an accusation of a violation of the law, realize how Orwellian the regulatory state has become. Broad loyalty to and affection for government to alien-run afoul of an agency such as the FCC and want to defend yourself, you don't go to a regular court. You go to an administrative court run by the agency. You don't get a jury. The case is decided by an administrative judge who is an employee of the agency. You do not need to be found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, but rather by the loosest of all legal standards, a preponderance of the evidence. The regulatory agency is also free of many of the rules that constrain and prosecutors in the normal legal system. For example, regulatory agencies are not required to show probable cause for getting a search warrant. A regulatory agency can inspect property or place of business under broad conditions that has set for itself.

There's much more, but it amounts to this: Regulatory agencies, or the regulatory divisions within cabinet agencies, operate as self-contained entities that create de facto laws that Congress would never have passed on an up-or-down vote. They act as both police and judge in enforcing the laws they have created. It amounts to an extra-legal state within the state.

I have focused on the regulatory state because it now looms so large in daily life as to have provoked a reaction that divides American government isn't supposed to work this way.

The normal legal system has become complicit. Laws such as Sarbanes-Oxley, the Affordable Care Act, and Dodd-Frank are so complicated that they are impossible to obey without the aid of lawyers ensuring compliance. The tax code is riddled with favors for people with connections and filled with hazards for ordinary Americans. The Department of Justice is zealous in prosecuting political adversaries but somehow doesn't prosecute political friends.

Washington now openly operates as a favors-for-money bazaar. Substitute “campaign contribution” for “bribe” and you can describe Washington with the same sentences that describe how to get things done in a Third World kleptocracy. Almost anything is possible if the contribution is big enough. Nothing is possible without contribution. “Cashing in” has become a term of art to describe a typical career path for bureaucrats, elected officials, and Capitol Hill staff—part of a government that has fully earned our distrust.

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VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

# Conservatism At a Crossroads



Text

It is the best and the worst of times for conservatives. They believe in fiscal responsibility, smaller government, individual freedom, strong defense, and reverence for custom. Most American institutions—academia and the Western traditions and American customs have won back both houses of Congress. Republicans enjoy strong majorities in the state legislatures and governorships. President Obama's approval ratings in the polls regularly fall below 45 percent. The public seems to tire of politically correct demagoguery, dumber than the dumbing down of every issue into a matter of the noble person versus the selfish individual.

Most polls suggest that far more Americans see themselves as conservative than as liberal. Red states run much smaller budgets, deficits despite having lower taxes. Few Americans believe that states such as California, Illinois, and New York, or cities such as Baltimore, Chicago, and Detroit, are paradigms of 21st-century good government. Abroad, statism—whether the crony state capitalism of China or the paternalistic socialism of the European Union—is in crisis.

But on fiscal and defense issues, conservatives remain weak in an otherwise largely liberal garden. Defense expenditures as a percentage of GDP are sinking to pre-World War II levels, and the national debt will soon top \$20 trillion; \$500 billion annual deficits are now hailed as proof of fiscal discipline. In foreign policy, “leading from behind” and offering a “reset” of relations with antagonistic states characterize America’s retreat from traditional post-war leadership. Chaos fills the void.

The Affordable Care Act is transforming health care from private enterprise into another government-run entitlement. Americans and perhaps Westerners in general sense that the Climate-change legislation, largely thwarted by congressional

resistance, is being implemented by executive order and by the EPA’s freelancing efforts to shut down fossil-fuel plants. Taxes have been raised—and are likely to rise again, given public reluctance to prune back unsustainable Social Security and Medicare spending.

On many social and political issues, conservatism is even further strangled. Gay marriage by judicial fiat is suddenly the law of the land and imposed intolerantly on private businesses that dare to object on religious grounds. Half the country believes in abortion on demand, despite periodic revelations of the macabre practices of a Dr. Gosnell or a Planned Parenthood. Bureaucratic regulations grow at the expense of markets and property rights. Enforcement of federal immigration laws in many states is nonexistent.

The common denominator of the new lawlessness is a perception of social justice. Perceived equality and fairness determine whether a particular law is enforced or ignored. Sanctuary cities declare themselves exempt from federal immigration laws, even though no community could renounce the Endangered Species Act or exempt itself from federal laws governing handgun purchases.

Popular American culture—and indeed Western civilization from Europe to the former British Commonwealth—is largely liberal. Progressive opponents of religion criticize a liberal pope, who admonishes his flock on everything from climate change to consumer capitalism, for being too conservative. Art, literature, music, and architecture are evaluated mostly through the prism of race, class, and gender, and according to the degree to which they contribute to progressive change and equality of outcomes.

Hollywood movies rarely reflect American values of patriotism, individual heroism, physical courage, or the defense of tradition and custom. Most American institutions—academia and the public schools, state and federal bureaucracies, the entertainment industry, journalism and the media, and philanthropic foundations—are decidedly liberal. Their creed is a government-related parity and equality of result, ostensibly directed against the exercise of personal choice and individual liberty. Illegitimacy and divorce rates are high, and birth rates are low.

“The Life of Julia,” an Obama-campaign slideshow about cradle-to-grave dependence on federal assistance, *Little House on the Prairie*, is the preferred social model. Gratuitous violence, sexual decadence, and cruelty are the stuff of popular video games and rap music. The graphic lyrics and showmanship of Jay-Z and Miley Cyrus have replaced the upbeat messages of the Four Tops and the Beach Boys; the latter had not been necessarily antithetical to earlier musical genres such as jazz and folk music.

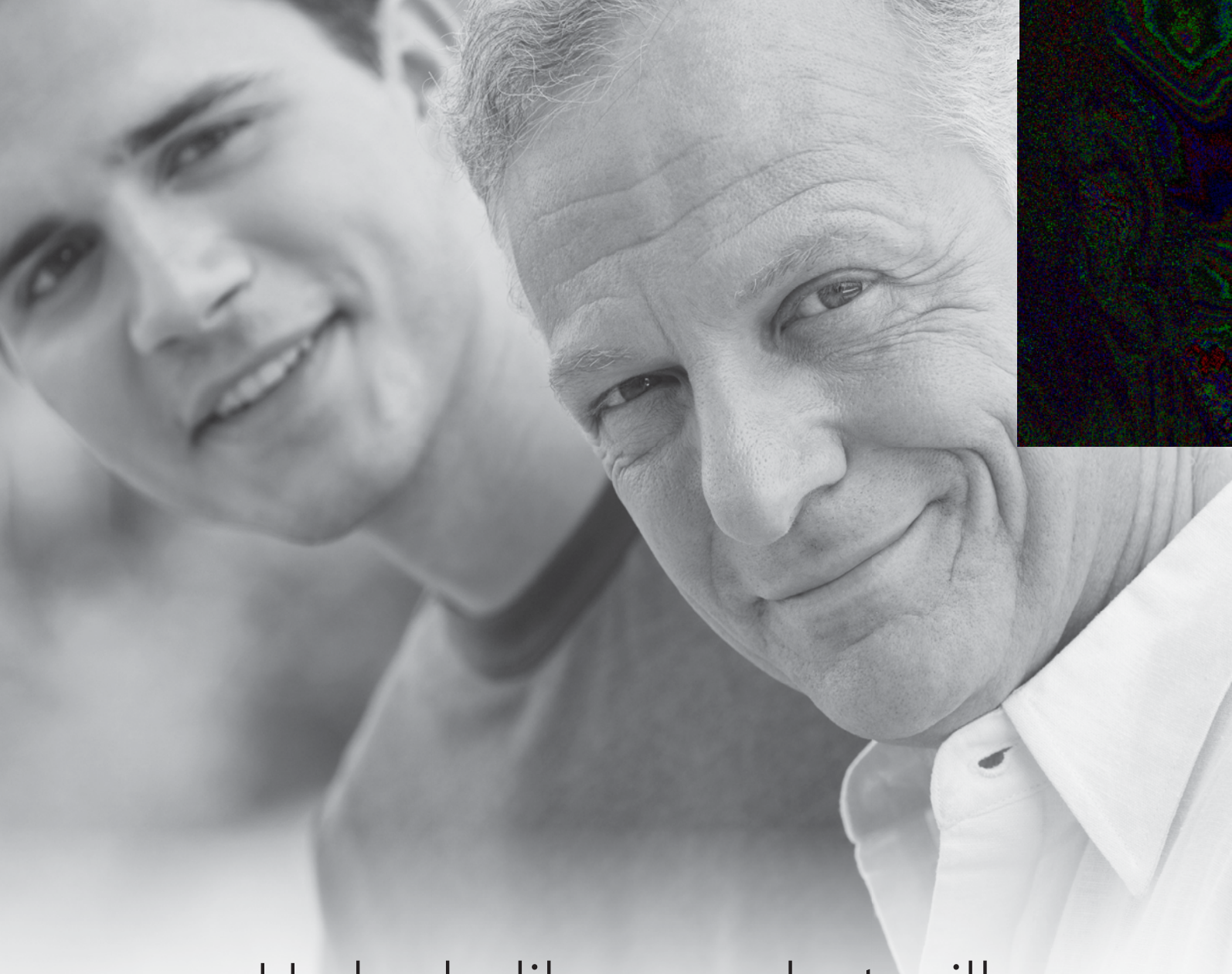
Multicultural separatism, not the old American idea of a melting pot, is the norm; identity politics deliver far greater career dividends for a racial and ethnic elite harboring an array of grievances than does assimilation.

In reaction to all this, the rise of the Tea Party, constitutional conservatives, and outsider presidential candidates such as Donald Trump, Ben Carson, and Carly Fiorina may represent about half the country, people whose anger at the direction of their culture and politics has grown, especially during the years of the Obama administration.

Americans and perhaps Westerners in general sense that the leisure and affluence that follow from free markets and consensual government—especially the marriage of consumer capitalism with constitutionally protected freedoms—have created ostentatious wealth and hedonism that can easily descend into license and

*Mr. Hanson is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and the author, most recently, of The Savior Generals.*





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ennui. So powerful is the allure of the redistributive state—from convalescent care for seniors to Social Security payouts for Baby Boomers—that even conservatives don’t dare to question the expansion of government programs that are largely unfunded.

So there is a conservative awareness that the direction of the West is neither healthy nor sustainable. But solutions give way to confusion and frustration, echoing the Roman irony that the remedy is felt to be worse than the disease. Several forces contribute to this trend toward ever-increasing government services and state-mandated redistribution.

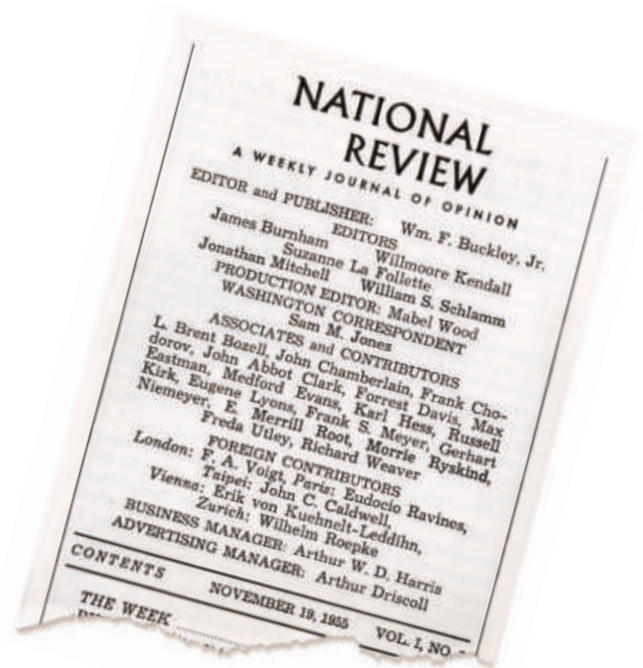
Globalization and worldwide instant communications have blurred national borders. Germans and Californians may have ample safety nets in place for their own poor. But if millions of migrants from impoverished failed societies reach their lands—and if the ordeal is televised to hundreds of millions—they are first felt to be obligated to accept “refugees” and then almost immediately held culpable for not ensuring near-instant parity. The disaster in Congo becomes, in Washington, a referendum on caring; those fleeing the Third World mess of Oaxaca are seen as California’s moral responsibility.

Technology may redefine poverty even as it accentuates increasing anger over imparity. The abundance of mass-produced goods and electronic appurtenances has put the computing power of the late-20th-century rich into the palms of the underclass of 2015. Today a cheap Kia is by all measures a better car than a Mercedes of 20 years ago. Hot-water heaters, air conditioners, and central heating enable the American poor of Bakersfield to enjoy the same interior environments as those in \$30 million beach homes in Malibu. Yet with this widespread material improvement comes only increased appetite—and increased anger over inequality. It matters not that the Kia of today is better than yesterday’s Mercedes if only the so-called rich can afford today’s Mercedes.

America and the West in general are increasingly urbanized. Population density fuels more government. The self-reliance necessary to live a rural life, as the Founders saw, also provides a check on the natural tendencies of cities to grow, of populations to homogenize, and of government to prune liberty. The collective dream of the Western planner is now high-density apartment buildings, mass transit, and government control and ownership of collective green spaces outside the urban core.

Urbanism ensures romantic ignorance about nature and the countryside—and ultimately collective suicide: Techies in hiking boots and parkas confuse their day trips to Yosemite with back-to-nature purity and then agitate for regulatory protection of three-inch bait fish in the San Francisco Delta, to the point of cutting off the irrigation water that ensures the availability of the organic grapes and lettuce they buy at Whole Foods. Both environmentalism and notions of fairness are fueled by urban density and ultimately war against the logger, the farmer, the miner, and the rancher—and their creed of muscular autonomy, autarky, and a more realistic appraisal of nature.

The challenge of conservatives is educational and informational: not just to see Republicans take back the three branches of government, but also to explain to a new generation of Americans how their lives are daily being co-opted and trivialized by an overarching bureaucratic state and the attendant popular culture that it spawns. If, instead, we persist on the present course, America as we have known it will end not with a bang but a whimper. **NR**



JONAH GOLDBERG

# Fusionism, Then and Now



Text

**‘W**HO lost the libertarians?’ It’s a question you hear a lot from conservatives of late. The reason should be obvious to anyone who has followed the conservative movement’s internecine intellectual frictions over the last decade—or decades. Self-described libertarians are a minority, even among the ranks of people one could properly describe as libertarian. On many, or even most, contentious public-policy issues—economics, gun rights, health care, free speech, regulation, constitutional interpretation—most support for the libertarian position actually comes from people who describe themselves as conservatives. In other words, conservatives tend to be libertarian, but libertarians tend not to be conservative.

And self-described libertarians are very keen on emphasizing that distinction. They justifiably point to the areas, many of them quite significant, where the bulk of libertarians depart from the conservative consensus: foreign policy, drugs, gay rights, etc. Of course, the demarcations between these different camps are not hard and clearly defined. Many conservatives now—and even more in the past—hold the same convictions as libertarians on foreign policy and drugs and, to a lesser



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Young America's Foundation shares a special bond with *National Review* because we share the same founder. In 1955, William F. Buckley Jr. oversaw the publication of the first issue of *National Review*. In September of 1960, Buckley hosted 100 young conservatives at his home in Sharon, Connecticut who founded YAF to engage young people in the Conservative Movement.

William F. Buckley Jr. once said,

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extent, on issues such as gay rights. But as a generalization, libertarians would not sit well at a magazine with a strong Catholic bent. In the 1960s and 1970s, prominent libertarians such as Murray Rothbard and Karl Hess hoped to use anger over the Vietnam War to create a new sort of fusionism, marrying the so-called Old Right and the New (i.e., radical) Left. Hess, the famous Goldwater speechwriter, eventually joined Students for a Democratic Society and the Industrial Workers of the World (a.k.a. the Wobblies) and worked with the Black Panthers. In 1968, Rothbard, a brilliant if eccentric intellectual straight down to our own Charles C. W. Cooke, author of the recent *Conservatarian Manifesto*, have worked assiduously left-wing journal *Rampart* to find common ground and common purpose with our libertarian comrades.

Some conservatives feel the same way about libertarians, but few are passionate about it. Conservative figures from William F. Buckley Jr. (who described himself in the sub title of one of his last books as a “libertarian journalist”) and Frank Meyer to Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan. In 1968, Rothbard, a brilliant if eccentric intellectual straight down to our own Charles C. W. Cooke, author of the recent *Conservatarian Manifesto*, have worked assiduously left-wing journal *Rampart* to find common ground and common purpose with our libertarian comrades.

Most famously, Meyer created an entire philosophical project called “fusionism” to explain why conservatism and libertarianism should remain joined at the hip. In brief, he said that a virtuous society must be a free society, because acts not

a new, younger generation of rightists, of “conservatives,” . . . who thought that the real problem of the modern world was nothing so ideological as the state vs. individual liberty or government intervention vs. the free market; the real problem, they declared, was the preservation of tradition, order, Christianity and good manners against the modern sins of reason, license, atheism and boorishness.

“We have allowed ourselves,” Rothbard continued,

to sacrifice the American ideals of peace and freedom and anti-colonialism on the altar of a crusade to kill communists throughout the world; we have surrendered the libertarian birthright into the hands of those who yearn to restore the Golden Age of the Holy Inquisition. It is about time that we wake up and rise up to restore our heritage.



The design concept for the new magazine. It was to have been called “National Weekly,” but it turned out that a trade publication held the copyright on that name. And so, from the very first issue, it was NATIONAL REVIEW.

freely chosen are not virtuous. NATIONAL REVIEW remains an incessant snipes by saying that they “declined to inhabit, essentially fusionist enterprise. But while it’s easy to find along with Mr. Rothbard, the overcrowded quarters of Freak conservatives who want to keep this marriage going, it’s harder to find prominent libertarians who do. As a matter of course, however “shrewd or useful [Rothbard’s] occasional aperçus in economics.”

In the last decade, Brink Lindsey, a scholar at the Institute, tried to defenestrate conservative-libertarian fusion—a union of ice and fire.” Measured against such yardsticks, the distance between conservatives and libertarians today seems, dubbed “libertarianism.” Save at the margins, the uneasy effort failed, largely because the animosity that some libertarians hold for conservatism pales in comparison with the outright revulsion that progressives hold for any libertarians were never the conservatives’ to lose.

But the friction between libertarians and conservatives is nothing new. There has never been a time when libertarians (or “individualists,” as they used to be called) did not struggle against what they perceived to be unjust shackles. The history of NATIONAL REVIEW is in significant part a story of William F. Buckley Jr.’s trying to herd a bunch of cats. Ayn Rand, the anti-statist titan, was “read out” of the conservative movement in these pages by Whittaker Chambers for her views on religion and morality. Rand held “that man the exists for his own sake, that the pursuit of his own happiness is his highest moral purpose, that he must not sacrifice himself to others, nor sacrifice others to himself.” She denounced the crucifixion as “the symbol of the sacrifice of the ideal to the nonideal.” It’s not hard to see why many

The editors of NATIONAL REVIEW replied to Rothbard’s incessant snipes by saying that they “declined to inhabit, along with Mr. Rothbard, the overcrowded quarters of Freak House,” however “shrewd or useful [Rothbard’s] occasional aperçus in economics.”

In 1981, Russell Kirk denounced libertarians in the pages of *Modern Age* as “chirping sectaries” and insisted that any “talk of forming a league or coalition” with them “is like advocating a union of ice and fire.” Measured against such yardsticks, the distance between conservatives and libertarians today seems, anything, to have shrunk.

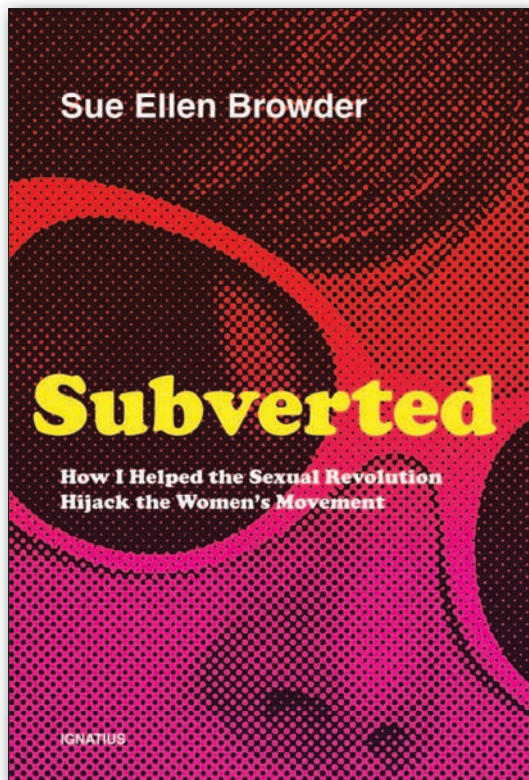
What this history suggests is that the question “Who lost the libertarians?” rests on a false premise—because the libertarians were never the conservatives’ to lose.

It is a peculiar irony that a movement that seeks to conserve the best of the past is one of the youngest political movements in America. Socialism, progressivism, anarchism, and environmentalism have far older pedigrees than conservatism does. The American variants of socialism go back to the Shakers and even Thomas Paine (albeit tenuously). Progressivism is a cousin of socialism but nonetheless has its own family tree stretching back to Auguste Comte and John Stuart Mill. Anarchism in the West has roots going back to Diogenes. Environmentalism is more amorphous, but one can find antecedents in medieval England and more obviously during the Industrial Revolution.

If you see the direct descendant of classical liberalism, then libertarians also have a more venerable lineage than conservatives. But there’s the rub. Do they? The Founding Fathers were all classical liberals, but unlike many of their opposite numbers in the French Revolution, they



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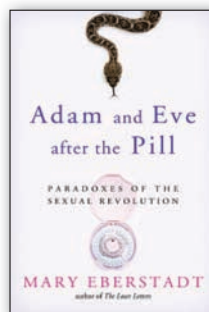
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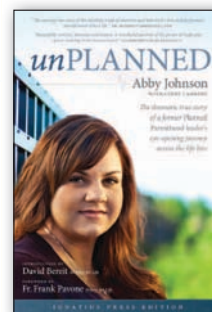
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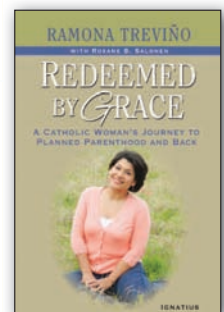


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were largely conservative in manners, morals, and faith. Their conservatism was not labeled as such because it suffused the culture and was simply taken for granted. One need only read the writings of George Washington or John Adams to understand that they were among the first fusionists. (Robert Nisbet once hinted that even Mill, the fons et origo of so much libertarian thought, was actually more of a fusionist himself, clawing back his libertarian reductionism with caveats about the need to curb liberty for the young, the infirm, the “backward,” et al.)

Until the middle of the 20th century, the conservative side of the classical-liberal tradition in America was not cultivated the way the libertarian side was, in large part because no one thought it needed to be cultivated. It is not by accident that the first chapter of George Nash’s 1976 classic *The Conservative Intellectual Movement Since 1945* is titled “Revolt of the Libertarians.” They were there first.

This is not to deny that there were conservatives before the founding of NATIONAL REVIEW or the publication of Russell

That is why conservatives in America are so different from the conservatives of Europe—especially continental Europe—or anywhere else. Comte Joseph de Maistre, the quintessential European conservative, sought to conserve the absolute rule of Church and Throne. The American Founders sought to overthrow even the partial rule of Church and Throne. And therein lies all the difference. In Europe, conservatism was understood as the opposite of classical liberalism. The reverse was the case in America, as Friedrich Hayek observed: “What in Europe was called ‘liberalism’ was here the common tradition on which the American polity had been built: thus the defender of the American tradition was a liberal in the European sense.”

Modern conservatism was born from the shock of events—two total world wars punctuated by a peacetime effort to import Bismarckian socialism to our shores, not to mention the long march through the institutions of Marxists, Deweyan progressives, secular humanists, et al. As the conservative movement matured, it sought out the ideological tools and weapons necessary for the counter-assault that would liberate the prin-

In an age when institutions were under sustained ideological assault, conservatives recognized that they needed **an ideology to defeat an ideology.**

Kirk’s *Conservative Mind*. There were. But they were scattered among various movements and institutions, just as conservative ideas were strewn about. Kirk’s contribution in *The Conservative Mind* was to revisit the historical record and connect the dots in a way that presented American conservatism as a viable tradition. No wonder the early masthead of NATIONAL REVIEW was like the roster of a life raft, crammed with soaked and battered refugees from the shores of Communism, socialism, progressivism, and the Old Right.

Indeed, the Old Right itself was a pretty motley crew. Rothbard was on defensible, if somewhat rocky, ground when he traced his lineage back to it. There certainly were many anarchists and individualists among its ranks. But there were also agrarians, single-taxers, nationalists, traditionalists, and a glorious smattering of brilliant cranks, literary curmudgeons, and cape-wearing misanthropes. What made them the “Old Right” was the emergence of a new Right, in the form of the conservative movement we have today.

The late Samuel Huntington recognized the newness of that movement in 1957, when he wrote his sadly forgotten essay “Conservatism as an Ideology.” Huntington argued that conservatism was a “positional ideology.” What he meant is that conservatism emerges from the challenges presented by the existing order. “Men are driven to conservatism by the shock of events, by the horrible feeling that a society or institution which they have approved or taken for granted and with which they have been intimately connected may suddenly cease to exist.” In an age when institutions were under sustained ideological assault, conservatives recognized that they needed an ideology to defeat an ideology.

ciples upon which this nation was founded. Yes, conservatives borrowed heavily from the libertarian tradition, but they also borrowed from the religious, patriotic, and moral arsenals of the Founders. That is why the libertarians have stood apart like Coptic Christians, who claim a lineage and authenticity that needs no sanction from the larger, more powerful, and more syncretic Catholic Church.

As I write, a certain wealthy real-estate magnate and reality-show star threatens to become the titular leader of the conservative movement, at least insofar as the Republican party is the practical expression of that movement. He makes little or no effort to celebrate conservatism as a defense of the American tradition of liberty. He never talks about the Constitution, nor plausibly about religion. He makes scant mention of freedom. Instead, he taps into deep reservoirs of resentment and a kind of nationalism that has little to do with patriotism rightly understood. Popularity and “winning” are his lodestars. He is unlikely to surmount the obstacles erected by the Founders to keep demagogues from wielding what Edmund Burke called “arbitrary power,” yet he and his supporters have illuminated the vulnerabilities within the larger conservative project.

Conservatism is an ethereal thing rather than a political system. It has no written constitution to rely on in dark times. And while it is not free of ideas, it is, as a positional ideology, resistant to formulation in a simple, fixed credo. As such, it always stands at risk of being exploited by someone who yokes personal ambition to popular passion in the service of a movement that is conservative in name only. And if that happens, the time will come for libertarians to ask, “Who lost the conservatives?”

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RAMESH PONNURU

# Family: The Crucial Institution



Text

**M**ARRIED white Christians were the demographic core of the country when *NATIONAL REVIEW* was founded, and still are the demographic core of conservative movement it midwived. The difference in verb tenses between the two halves of that sentence problem for that movement, and points to one for the court.

The last 60 years have witnessed a “great sorting” of people and voters in the United States, a sorting this magazine promoted. Partisan divisions have come more closely to coincide with ideological ones. Americans got “a choice, not an echo,” as conservatives promised during one of *NR*’s early campaigns. As part of this process, married white Christians have grown much more likely to vote Republican. A bit more

than 40 percent of them backed Dwight Eisenhower’s party, according to political scientist Alan Abramowitz, while more than 60 percent backed George W. Bush’s. They have also shrunk as a share of the electorate, going roughly from 80 percent over that period. Among voters under 30, they went from almost 80 to below 20 percent.

Conservatives will not succeed in the future unless they perform better among the nonwhite, the non-Christian, and the non-married. They will have to do better among non-Christians absent an upsurge in Christian belief. Even if immigration were to stop, they would have to do better among people whose ancestors mostly came from outside Europe.

Making inroads among non-Christians and nonwhites is a formidable challenge that conservatives have barely begun to tackle. But it is the decline of marriage—the decrease in the percentage of adults who are married, and in the percentage of children being raised by parents who are married to each other—that may prove the most problematic for conservatism.

Childbearing out of wedlock and divorce have risen; people marry later in life, and fewer people ever marry. Marriage has declined for many reasons: the economic emancipation of women, the longer schooling encouraged by modern economies, the invention of the birth-control pill, the spread of liberal individualism, and more besides. We would not want to reverse all of these developments, even if we could.

But the weakening of marriage has come at a heavy cost. Children generally do better when they are raised by parents who are married to each other: better academically, economically, and behaviorally. They do worse in other environments. Even children in what we used to call “intact” families fare worse in communities where such families are rare. And we have some reason to think that the decline of marriage has decreased happiness for adults, too, and especially for women. Americans with relatively low incomes and levels of schooling, in particular, have experienced the downside of these trends. Among them the decline of marriage has been especially pronounced.

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## MY FIRST ISSUE OF NR

I am from a family of Democrats. My grandfather had a bust of FDR on his bookcase.

My first vote in a presidential election was in 1980. I could not bring myself to vote for Jimmy Carter, but I naïvely believed the liberal media’s characterization of Ronald Reagan, so I voted for John Anderson. After Reagan became president, I realized that he was not the extreme, shallow, and trigger-happy man they had made him out to be. I felt deceived and began searching out right-leaning publications.

In the mid 1980s, a friend recommended *NATIONAL REVIEW*. His mother was a strong Republican (she hated Bill Moyers) and an *NR* subscriber. I read an issue, loved it, and have been a subscriber ever since.

**RODMAN E. HONECKER**  
BRIELLE, N.J.





*"My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."*

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Friday, January 20, 1961

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The just-released John F. Kennedy presidential dollar figured to be among the most popular issues in the ongoing series of \$1 coins honoring the nation's chief executives, now in the ninth year of its roughly 10-year run. JFK was one of America's most beloved presidents, and his shocking assassination ensured that his images would endure, as if frozen in time, in our nation's history.

**Historic Coin Portrait** The new coin design is the work of Don Everhart, a senior sculptor-engraver on the U.S. Mint's roster of staff artists. Depicting a contemplative JFK looking down and seemingly lost in thought, the image is similar to the official portrait hanging in the White House — also capturing Kennedy in a reflective moment, with his head bowed and eyes downcast. The portrait was painted in 1970, seven years after the assassination, and was closely monitored by Kennedy's widow, Jacqueline, who not only commissioned the artist, Aaron Shikler, but also gave him detailed instructions on how she wanted the president to be shown. The portrait differs greatly from the presidential images on other White House paintings, and Everhart has acknowledged that Shikler's work inspired the equally unique likeness of JFK on the coin.

**A Woman's Touch** It's a little-known fact, but Jacqueline Kennedy, one of America's favorite First Ladies, also played a role in the final design of the enormously popular Kennedy half dollar, which was first issued in 1964. She asked the coin's designer, Mint Chief Engraver Gilroy Roberts, to modify the details of her husband's hair — and the changes were, of course, made.

**JFK, Purple Heart & Navy SEALs** John F. Kennedy was a different kind of president — the youngest ever elected, recipient of a Purple Heart for his heroism, creator of the Navy SEALs, and the first (and so far only) Roman Catholic, to cite four important examples. In my opinion, such a president deserves a coin that likewise bears a historic design. I believe Don Everhart captured what Jackie and JFK would have liked, given the design of the presidential painting. I base this on a story my parents told me many years ago regarding an interaction they had with Jack and Jackie Kennedy at a 1959 dinner in Lake Charles, Louisiana. (See Bonus Gifts)

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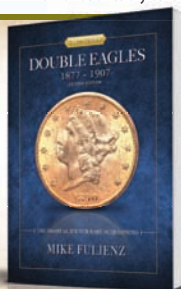
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who do not have the support of a husband are more likely to need the support of the state—and, even if they do not need it immediately, to value their ability to rely on it if their circumstances turn worse. Republicans have often been described as the “daddy party,” offering voters order and judgment rather than care and validation. But what happens to the daddy when fatherhood stops being as much a lived reality?

If this is right, then the future of conservatism is tied up in the future of marriage. Republicans might be able to do what an America with an even weaker marriage culture than we have. But they will have to be less conservative Republicans, taking part in running a larger government at the behest of a less secure populace.

The America in which NR developed “fusionism”—the combination of libertarian economics and traditionalist morals that would characterize modern conservatism—had a level of marital stability that was unusual in our history and is almost mythical now. The country had gone through a great deal of centralization and homogenization as a result of the Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II, and the Cold War. Big government, big business, big labor, and big media never loomed as large in American life as they did in the 1950s, and never would again. It was the magazine’s libertarianism that stood athwart the age.

The government still needs reining in. It needs it more, since it is larger than it was 60 years ago: more meddlesome, unwieldy, and ineffective. But conformity in lifestyles is not our era’s problem, and the romance of collectivism is dead. The decline of the family is what most needs resisting in our time.

There is no ready-made program, no five-point plan, for bringing about a cultural change that would lead more people to raise children within healthy marriages. But conservatives could stand to spend a little less time thinking about the conditions necessary for businesses to flourish, as important as that is, and a little more time about those for families. If we devote our minds to it, we would probably find that there are a lot of market reforms—in housing, in higher education, in taxes, in health care—that would make it more affordable to start and raise a family.

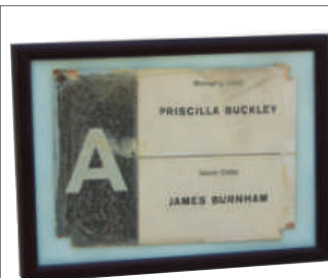


RICHARD BROOKHISER

# Will We Govern Ourselves?

I TAKE a personal interest in the Founders’ revival, since I helped start it. My first biography, *Founding Father: Rediscovering George Washington*, was generously reviewed by a major scholar, Joseph J. Ellis, on the front page of the *New York Times Book Review* in February 1996. That was a warm-up: The breakout book for the Founders was Ellis’s own *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson* (1997), which won the National Book Award. In its wake, our professional historians (Edmund Morgan, Gordon Wood, Jack Rakove) and professional biographers (David McCullough, Ron Chernow) moved steadily through the great names: Franklin, Washington, Hamilton, John Adams, Madison. Lesser greats had their innings, from Sam Adams to Alexander McGillivray, the Franco-Scottish chief of the Creek Indians whose negotiations with the Washington administration were almost as complex and dishonest as Iran’s today. After dozens of volumes and almost 20 years, I thought we might be slowing down.

Instead, the Founders’ revival rolls through other media. Lin-Manuel Miranda’s hip-hop musical *Hamilton* had a triumphant opening on Broadway, its weekly grosses now trailing only *The Lion King*. On television, AMC’s *Turn: Washington’s Spies*, a tale of Revolutionary espionage based on a book by NR veteran Alexander Rose, was renewed for a third season. Even *Sleepy Hollow*, Fox’s fantasy jape, also renewed for a third season, has a Founding angle, since Philip Crane, reincarnated in modern-day Tarrytown, N.Y., deals not only with the powers of hell but also with such local friends of his as Betsy Ross and Benjamin Franklin. Washington Irving, who was both Crane’s creator and a biographer of George Washington, would be amused to see his interests so briskly telescoped.



For two decades, senior editor Jim Burnham and managing editor Priscilla Buckley (Bill’s older sister) shared an office at 150 East 35th Street. This sign hung outside their door.

The decentralization of American life has been largely renewed for a third season, has a Founding angle, since a good thing for the country in general and conservatism in particular. But we should not consider the family just another large institution in retreat. Families are the crucial small institutions we need to make our way through our large, complex, and endlessly various society, and we need them to be strong.



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We feel close to the Founders because they are of Liberty” Today those are understood to be what Baron historical figures go. When I give Founders-related talk, for—rights. Rights talk, and even some of our ri sometimes take the audience on the following time trip—When healthy after two centuries.

I was in college, I heard a lecture by Alger Hiss, the Soviet spy, asked which of the amendments that make up the Bill of Rights could be passed today. My quick answer was the First Amendment: The amending process is deliberately hard, he told President Lincoln to “get over it, damn fool!” when the ten that were ratified by December 1791 were understood; and when Lincoln looked over a parapet at Jubal Early’s raid onto Washington; and when Lincoln served his lone term in prison, they thought that the nation’s new structure would mean one of the congressmen he served with was former president Andrew Johnson. No such mandate exists now.

John Quincy Adams, who heard the cannon and saw the smoke from the Battle of Bunker Hill from his family’s home early on, thought I believe a number would pass rather than the Second—shorn of its original intent as gun owners would surely secure the Second—shorn off. From us to the Revolution is only four days’ ride on a ship about guns’ being legal only for use in militia duty.

It’s a lot farther back to Charlemagne. There are enough journalists, old-school ACLU types, and

But what do we take from these not-so-dead Americans, irked by campus PC to pass the First Amendment beyond mere information or entertainment? How do they see freedom of the press, and of speech. Similar to the First Amendment, impress or inspire us? Is there anything we are overlooking? enough believers in enough different churches to

At the heart of the Founding was a war, and war insists on the free exercise of religion. No one thinks anyone is grossing. The Civil War and World War II are the greatest quartering troops in private houses, but the practical magnets for historians and reenactors, but the Revolution seems so outlandish that if anyone offered the Third Amendment surely third. The Revolution (longer than the Civil War and more it might also pass.

part in World War II put together) was our longest war. Contentious issues are routinely debated in a language of right and wrong. Abortion supporters uphold a woman's right to control her own body; opponents defend the right of the unborn to have one. The Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments were both on paper and in practice: Jefferson wrote that all men are created equal; Washington was the last American commander-in-chief who had been denied black Americans, both slave and free. To lead integrated units until the Korean War, the civil-rights movement of the mid 20th century said, We re-

Despite its length and its extent, the Revolution is more comprehensible than other modern world wars because of its principles. That women, gays, and transsexuals all sought to appropriate it. Fewer than 30,000 men fought at Yorktown, compared with appropriate it.

200,000 at Oudenarde (1708) or more than half a million at the Battle of Leipzig (1814). Its smaller numbers were a product of its basic aim—maritime logistics—Britain and France had to manage their own shipping from overseas, while the United States had to manage its own. The British King (Article I, Section 10). At the same time, barely functioning government. As a result, both the act to ameliorate the effects of the market by regulation and its students today have a more intimate relationship with the public assistance to the unfortunate as a result of causes and trends; the trees do not choke out the forest, to earn a living wage, or some such. Marxists have

Though interest in any war often starts as a form of flangulism of class struggle, but Americans would rather use or voyeurism, a way of experiencing battle without their indistinct tongue.

like, or tedium, if pursued seriously you can offer a panorama of political philosophy or an economist might argue the human qualities: intuition, improvisation, planning, persuasion. Many of these rights are incoherent or violations of other rights: violence, backbiting, stupidity, panic. War can show the heights of what is a discussion for a later time. When we talk, we talk of valor: Baron Johann de Kalb, the German-born French officer, died talking about rights, which link the NRA and Caitlyn Jenner. The first came to America in 1768 as a secret agent immersed in Great Britain's derivatives and socialists, to the Battle of Bunbury. The Game of Anglo-French rivalry, scoping out the colonies, was more directly than by hearing a lecture by John Jay. Possible allies; by 1780, when the quondam realpolitik was laid out, if you can invoke the language of rights, you can win on the field at Camden, dying from multiple gunshot wounds. Founders on your side. Rights are right; they are also our bayonet wounds, he told a solicitous enemy officer, "I die, but another legacy of the Founders, equally important, death I always prayed for, the death of a soldier fighting for that is their faith in self-government. The rights of man." War can show the depths of villainy. Rights and self-government are related, of course, because of the Revolution's atrocities were committed by the rights share more than barriers against interference; they make or by their irregular American allies, a disparity that helped statehood about the worth of those who enjoy them. As Melville tilt the undecided—a third of the population Adams put it, man is "Nature's Roman, never to be scourged." Nature guessed—to the patriot side. At the same time, you Romans should also rule themselves.

Want to be a Loyalist who fell into the hands of patriots? The Founders who believed most eloquently in our fitness in New York or the Carolinas. self-rule was Jefferson. He expressed his respect for the poli

After the war, what? The climactic purpose of the adoption of the people, as undivided as a body, again and institution, according to its preamble, is to “secure the Blessing. All men are not created equally intelligent, but that





not trouble him, for he believed that all have an innate moral sense, which is a better guide to action than brains. Erroneous ideas or misinformation may cloud the moral sense, but time and truth will inevitably make all right. “He who made this form of intricate constitutional machinery or in the wisdom would have been a pitiful bungler, if he had made the rules and of insight of unelected guardians. When Justice Breyer our moral conduct a matter of science. . . . State a moral case that the Supreme Court should heed foreign laws, or a ploughman and a professor. The former will decide it as well when Justice Kennedy invokes “the right to define . . . the mysterious and often better than the latter, because he has not been tired of human life,” we can debate whether they are rightfully astray by artificial rules.” “The cause of republicanism, transcending the Constitution or superseding it. Even if they are umphing in Europe, can never fail to do so here in the long run, the latter, however, they and the Constitution they have Our citizens may be deceived for a while, and have been deceived; but as long as the presses can be protected, we may. Other limitations on the people arise from decisions that trust to them for light.” Jefferson’s observation about republicanism’s triumphing in Europe was made in 1799, just before Bonaparte became first consul. Jefferson made a number of bad predictions in his life but never lost his faith in man. employment) that they require a class of administrators to Even Founders with a darker view of humanity trusted people’s ability to rule themselves. Madison, who is famous for observing in *Federalist* No. 51 that men were not angels of independence. Yet any officer of the state who is secure in went on in the 1790s, after his burst of Constituting his position has little incentive to respect or heed the public,

We are a long way from monarchy or bondage, yet we are also a long way from Jefferson’s dreams of self-rule.

and -explicating, to offer public opinion as the ultimate force for good in the republic. “Every good citizen will be at once the Biblical vision of the modern administrative state is centinel over the rights of the people” and “over the authorities of the . . . government.” Hamilton, whose worldview was dark, yet (“Is it not time,” he asked *Federalist* No. 6, “to awake as charioteers and horsemen, their daughters as cooks and bakers; from the deceitful dream of a golden age” and recognize “that the of everyone’s seed, vineyards, and sheep will be appropriate . . . are yemote from the happy empire of perfect wisdom; maid servants, menservants, and asses will all be put to work. and perfect virtue?”), nevertheless trusted popular rule. When he gave his day-long oration at the Constitutional Convention advocating an executive and senators elected for life, as Mencken put it, “Democracy is the theory that the common defended his plan by noting that under it “all the magistrates people know what they want and deserve to get it good and were to be chosen “by the people, or by a process of election.” Or as Hugo Grotius, the Dutch legal philosopher, argued, originating with the people.” it is possible for people justly to place themselves in bondage.

The Founding generation’s faith in self-government was most pithily stated not by any of the Founders but by Levi Preston, a Minuteman who fought at Concord. When he was 91, Preston was asked by a young whippersnapper why he had fought. Was it because of the Stamp Act? The tea tax? The writings of John Locke? No, no, no, said Preston, the Revolution wound down, George Washington wrote a circular explained himself thus: “What we meant in going for those red-coats was this. We hadways governed ourselves, and we only farewell address. He is not ranked with our great writers, always meant to.” but there is one long paragraph in this message that is carefully

Do we still mean to? A presidential-election year may be the worst time to ask. It is the great symbol, almost the festival of our situation at that moment: “at tract of continent”; self-rule. Yet the sophisticated view of presidential contests various soils and climates”; “the rights of mankind . . . better is that they are brainless exercises, PR kabuki. Any real wonder understood and more clearly defined”; letters, commerce, that gets done is done behind the scenes, by soft-faced, handmen, Revelation. Then, the kicker: “At this auspicious handed manipulators. The only threats the stability of this period, the United States came into existence, and if their citi-system come from rube orgasms, precipitated in this cycle byens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders. entirely their own.” NR



JOHN O'SULLIVAN

# A People, Not Just an Idea

**'A**MERICA is not just a country," said the rock singer Bono, in Pennsylvania in 2004: "It's an idea." As John Jay pointed out, Americans were fortunate in having Bono is a decent, thoughtful, and public-spirited man. I didn't choose his quotation to suggest that this view of America is a kind of pop opinion. It just happened that in my Google search his name came ahead of many others from George Will to Irving Kristol to almost every recent presidential candidate, all of whom had described America either as an idea or as a "proposition nation," to distinguish it from ethnic realms or "blood and soil" ethnicities. This philosophical definition of America is now the conventional wisdom of Left and Right, at least among people who write and talk of such things. Indeed, we have heard variations on Bono's formulation many times that we probably fail to notice how paradoxical it is. But listen to how it sounds when reversed: "America is just an idea; it is a nation." Surely that version has much of the ring of common sense. For a nation is plainly something larger, more complex, and richer than an idea. A nation includes ideas. It may have evolved under the influence of particular set of ideas. But because it encompasses so many things—notably the laws, institutions, language of the nation, the loyalties, stories, and songs of the people; and above all Lincoln's "mystic chords of memory"—the nation becomes more than an idea with every election, every battle, every heroic tale, every historical moment that millions share. That is not to deny that the United States was founded on some very explicit political ideas, notably liberty and equality,

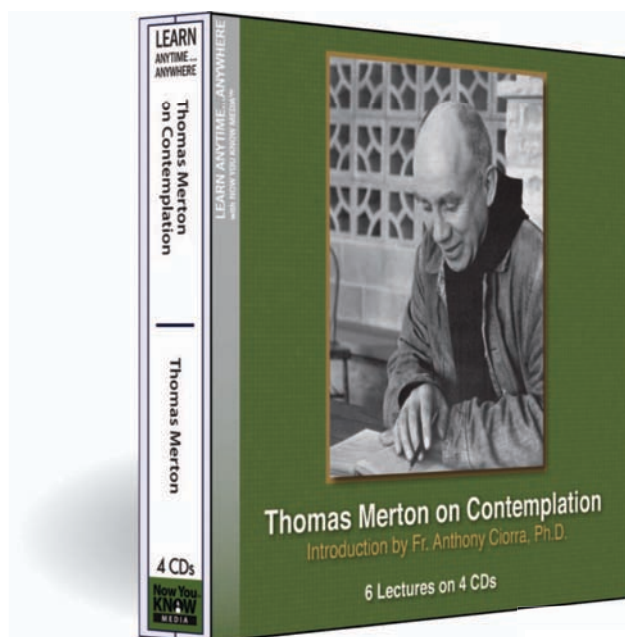
which Jefferson helpfully wrote down in the Declaration of Independence. To be founded on an idea, however, is not the same thing as to be an idea. A political idea is not a destination or a conclusion but the starting point of an evolution—and, in the case of the U.S., not really a starting point, either. The ideas in the Declaration on which the U.S. was founded were not original to this country but drawn from the Anglo-Scottish tradition of Whiggish liberalism. Not only were these ideas circulating well before the Revolution, but when the revolutionaries won, they succeeded not to a legal and political wasteland but to the institutions, traditions, and practices of colonial America—which they then reformed rather than abolished. We will not be far wrong if we think of 1776 as universalizing the liberalism of Britain's 1688 Glorious Revolution and extending the blessings of liberty from the British people to all mankind, or at least to those who made it to the fledgling United States.

Geography then came to the help of philosophy. American liberty was implemented not on a small, crowded island divided by hedgerows and ancient landmarks, but in the fruited plains of a vast continent. The opportunities it offered of liberty and property were much easier to seize and exploit in this newfound land than in a country whose property registration dated back to 1086 and the Domesday Book. America's founding ideas—equality as well as liberty—flourished more vigorously here than in their native habitat because there was more room, less in the way of obstacles, and a political nation that shared the same broad moral, religious, and democratic outlook (especially after the enforced departure of the Tories). Admittedly there were serious disagreements within this broad consensus—and, in the case of slavery, an original sin that still scars the nation—but the passage of the U.S. Constitution managed them more or less effectively until the Civil War.

As John Jay pointed out, Americans were fortunate in having the same religion (Protestantism), the same language, and the same institutions from the first. Given the spread of newspapers, railways, and democratic debate, that broad common culture would intensify the sense of a common American identity over time. It was a cultural identity more than an ethnic one, and was heavily qualified by regional loyalties, too, but Americans increasingly felt American when dealing with Canadians, the English, or other Europeans—American enough, that is, to be enthusiastic about fighting these damn foreigners. And the American identity might have become an ethnic one in time if it had not been for successive waves of immigration that brought other ethnicities into the nation. That early American identity was robust enough to absorb these new arrivals and to transform them into Americans. But it was not an easy or an uncomplicated matter. America's emerging cultural identity was inevitably stretched by the arrivals of millions of people from different cultures. The U.S. government, private industry, and charitable organizations all set out to "Americanize" them. It was a great historical achievement and helped to create a new America that was nonetheless the old America in all essential respects. In the metaphor employed by Herodotus, Samuel Huntington in his profound *Who Are We?*, every immigrant group added its own spice to the original American tomato soup. The final product was spicier but still recognizably tomato soup.



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On the eve of a visit to America in the 1920s, G. K. Chesterton noticed that his visa application required he answer such sophistical Americanism in a civics class; for a deeper knowledge questions as whether he was an anarchist. He commented: edge and commitment, living in America is a far surer recipe

means, finally, that Americans are a distinct and recognizable

Ann Coulter was denounced on the Internet during the revolution. When he eventually recovered his composure, he said. "I papal visit for suggesting that America's founding fathers had the preposition is a 'but,' but I fear it is probably a 'for'."

the American Catholic Church. What changed the American Catholic Church was two things: the lived experience of American liberty by Irish and other Catholic immigrants and the pressure from non-Catholic Americans that they should demonstrate their attachment to America and its free institutions. Enforcing the American idea is not always a nice business even when it is a necessary one.



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Text

PAUL JOHNSON

# When Law Began to Rule

It could well be argued that the signing by King John, and the subsequent issuing, of Magna Carta in 1215 was the decisive episode in English history. Contemporaries were in no doubt about its importance. Royal clerks set immediately making copies and sealing them. At least 20 made and put in the archives of cathedrals and other places. The charter, suitably amended, was reissued many times, notably in 1217 and 1225, and in derivative documents hundreds of times.

Although Magna Carta is now 800 years old, it is a document that has survived. Runnymede, the meadow on the Thames where it was signed, is much as it was then. Four of the copies are still intact. Two are in the British Library. One is in Lincoln Cathedral, another at Salisbury, both original places of deposit. Official documents from the first 50 years of English history that can still be studied can be numbered in hundreds, perhaps thousands.

What is notable about this agreement is its comprehensibility. Its Clauses 39 and 40 read:

No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him,

or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land.

To no one will we sell, to no one deny or delay right or justice.

Political liberty emerged more fully in England in the 17th century, when constitutional lawyers were able to use Magna Carta to firmly establish fundamental privileges and rights, such as trial by jury, habeas corpus, equality before the law, freedom from arbitrary arrest, and parliamentary control of taxation. The charter was seen by the English not just as a document, the first of the Statutes of the Realm, but almost as a person, a living historical giant. Sir Edward Coke, greatest of the 17th-century constitutional lawyers, discussing amendments by the House of Lords to the Petition of Rights, declared: "Magna Carta is such a fellow that he will have no sovereign." The Founding Fathers took the living image over in its entirety and referred to Magna Carta as "sinewy" and "tenacious," as though it were a person.

Now the remarkable thing about Magna Carta is that it long antedated the struggle for parliamentary democracy or any form of representative government. King Edward I's first parliament of knights and burgesses, held in London on April 25, 1275, came 60 years after Magna Carta and could not have been held without it. The Great Charter came four cen-

## MY FIRST ISSUE OF NR

It was the summer of 1999, and I went to the airport to pick up my wife and first child as they returned from a visit to her parents'. After arriving, I learned that their first leg had been delayed, causing them to miss their connection, which resulted in my waiting three hours at the airport. I wandered over to a shop to look for magazines to read. Usually I read the newsweeklies, but, as I had subscriptions to these, I needed something else. I picked up copies of *The New Republic* (I was a conservative, but I had a TNR subscription, which had recently lapsed, from back in the mid '90s ~~When~~ *The New Republic* was "sensibly liberal") and *NATIONAL REVIEW* to fill the time. That was the last time I ~~read~~ *The New Republic*. I got a subscription to *NATIONAL REVIEW* the same week.

G. DEVIN EIBAND  
CEDAR PARK, TEXAS

One is in Lincoln Cathedral, another at Salisbury, both original places before the English Civil War, the execution of the king and the triumph of the House of Commons, five centuries before the American Revolution and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, and six centuries before Britain's Great Reform Act.

The logic behind all this originated in the Great Charter, which established, once and for all, the supremacy of the rule of law. What King John, in signing it, was admitting—and what his successors were forced to admit in turn—was that he was subject to the law, like anyone else. In its clauses we enshrined the salient fact that the sovereign state was a state of kings or individuals, however rich or mighty or numerous, but of laws, and that the laws must always be supreme.

Mr. Johnson is the author of many books, including, most recently, *Mozart: A Life*.



# Gun owners set to get **free** survival food

**F**armers vow to keep up with the rush to supply every gun owner who calls toll free and beats the deadline to claim their free 72-hour survival food kit.

**In a crisis, your number one need is food. But not just any food.**

What everyone needs is good-for-25-years survival food that you can rely on when the time comes that food is scarce.

Well right now – in what is truly an unprecedented move – 72-hour Food4Patriots survival food kits are being given away to readers who are gun owners as long as they call a special toll-free hotline and beat the program deadline.

“This is all happening because we’re worried that the people in Washington have an agenda that is about more than just guns and ammo,” explained Frank Bates, a spokesman for the company.



*Military-grade Mylar pouches ensure these meals stay fresh for 25 years or more.*

**“Control the food, control the people.”**

We already know that they’re coming after our guns ... food could be next, and none of us wants to ever rely on this or any government to keep our families fed.”

Experts say that everyone should have at least a 72-hour supply of

non-perishable food on hand at all times.

Unfortunately, too many people make the mistake of choosing products that were never intended to be survival food. They end up with expensive stockpiles that are too big and too bulky to move, should an emergency force them to leave their homes.

**Chances are, their foods were not packaged for a 25-year or more shelf life. Most are not.**

And if they were unlucky enough to stock up on MREs, they’ll be depending on a product that can actually make you sick if you eat it for too long.

Food4Patriots survival foods are made of the finest ingredients, grown and packaged right here in the USA. They taste great. They provide the nutrition you need. And they were developed specifically for use in emergencies – although a lot of folks sometimes like them for a quick meal or snack.

Bates explained, “These are home-style meals that we package in airtight and resealable military-grade Mylar pouches that keep them fresh and delicious until they’re needed. Your family will enjoy meals much like they’re already eating every day.”

Every 72-hour kit that’s being given away contains four servings each of such familiar dishes as Liberty Bell Potato Cheddar Soup, Blue Ribbon Creamy Chicken Rice, Travelers Stew, and the always loved Granny’s Homestyle Potato Soup.

The company’s usual price for the



*Gun owners are flocking to claim their free 72-hour survival food kit before the deadline.*

72-hour kit is \$27.00 plus shipping. But gun owners who act quickly can pay only the \$9.95 shipping and handling fee through this program.

“We’re trying to ensure no gun owner gets left out, but they have to hurry because we have a limited supply of the 72-hour kits we can give away,” Bates warned. “Once word got out that gun owners could get free survival food, our phones have been ringing off the hook. We actually had to add extra agents to keep up with the incredible demand.”

**There is still time to take advantage of this free food offer, but be aware the program will end no matter what at midnight, December 31, 2015.**

## **HOW TO GET YOUR FREE 72-HOUR SURVIVAL FOOD KIT:**

Food4Patriots is committed to giving a free 72-hour kit to everyone who calls their toll-free hotline. Just give the agent the approval code shown below. Provide your delivery instructions and agree to pay the \$9.95 shipping and handling fee. That’s all there is to it.

**Approval Code: 72FREE**  
**Toll-Free Hotline: 1-800-716-3830**  
**Offer Cut-Off Date: 12/31/2015**

Please note: Food4Patriots says they will continue to give away these 72-hour kits for as long as their supplies last.

Due to media exposure, their phone lines may be busy. Just keep calling and you will get through.

The fact often tends to be forgotten that the rule of law is far more important than the form of government. Churchill may well have been right when he argued that democracy was the best form of government only in the sense that it was less objectionable than any other. But he might have added that none was any good unless the rule of law underlay it. And the rule of law must be established first. This of course was the fundamental fact that made the so-called Arab Spring such a nonsense. A dozen or so countries changed their constitutions during the spring of 2010, all to various forms of parliamentary democracy. But none established the rule of law, so all of them foundered the moment they were subjected to serious strain.

There is a long history of what I call the democratic illusion. The French Revolution established what its founder called universal male voting. It collapsed at what its nemesis, Napoleon Bonaparte, called “the first whiff of grapeshot.” France has had nine constitutions since then: all precarious. Gari bal di



JOHN HOWARD

# Long Live the Nation-State

In 1981, WFB wrote a rhapsodic column about peanut butter, mentioning Skippy as his favorite. An entrepreneur in Upstate New York, Douglas Manly, sent him a jar of the peanut butter he produced, Red Wing. WFB was instantly won over, and Red Wing was his official peanut butter for the rest of his life.



Mazzini united Italy and gave it a universalist constitution. But they had no magna carta in their history, and therefore no firmly established rule of law, so Mussolini made short work of their national assembly. The Weimar Republic had a universally elected Reichstag, and much else. Hitler, in 1933, destroyed it in a month. Not least, the new Soviet state that emerged from the First World War had a magnificent constitution. But it was based on nothing but rubble. Russia, too, had never fought Singapore's birth in August 1965 was traumatic. It was won the battle for a magna carta, and therefore what Britain is today. and Sidney Webb called “a perfect democracy” produced 100,000 square kilometers, and a population of only 1.9 million. the Gulag, with 20 million victims. Mao's China also had effectively, it had been ejected from the Federation of “perfect” constitution—and 70 million victims.

Americans rightly perceived the importance of Magna Carta in their historical heritage and built on it in the same way the British did. They perceived the rule of law to be the necessary prelude to and foundation of any constitutional process. Other English-speaking countries, notably Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and, above all, India, have followed the same course of development. South Africa, having been launched the same way two decades ago, has already departed from it with clearly disastrous results. There are perhaps 50 states in the world where parliamentary democracy in some shape has taken root, and all have based it on a successful battle to establish the rule of law first.

That is the fact we are celebrating on the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, and that is the lesson all aspiring democracies in the world have to learn.

RECENTLY, Singapore celebrated 50 years of nationhood. The success of this remarkable country is a vivid exemplar of the proposition that we still live in a world of nation-states.

Singapore's birth in August 1965 was traumatic. It was a tiny country with no natural resources, a land area of less than 700 square kilometers, and a population of only 1.9 million. Effectively, it had been ejected from the Federation of Malaysia because the pro-Malay policies of the Federation discriminated against the ethnic Chinese who constituted the majority of the Singapore's population.

Under the energetic and visionary leadership of Lee Kuan Yew, Singaporeans set about building a powerful city-state. Half a century later, Singapore's per capita income is the highest of the region. Its economic stability is a magnet for capital investment from around the world.

Like the current Singaporean prime minister, Lee Hsien Loong, once remarked to me, “The only resource we had was our people.” More specifically, Singapore was nourished by the cultural elements. First, there was the ferocious work ethic and belief in the importance of education, derived from the Confucian tradition. Then there was a strong commitment to

NR Mr. Howard is a former prime minister of Australia.





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free and open trade. In addition, English was taught in schools, and maintained as the language of commerce, which bound them together. Singapore's three ethnic groups—Chinese, Malays, and Indians—together. Finally, preserving the essence of the British judicial system cemented the nation-state's unity and stability. In the past year, Australia has negotiated free-trade agreements with China, Japan, and Korea. Negotiations for one but it has also pursued an independent foreign policy un- beholden to other nations or groups. It is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, but it has been more openly pro-American than the other members of that group.

Singapore has played a role as an active regional citizen, but it has also pursued an independent foreign policy un- beholden to other nations or groups. It is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, but it has been more openly pro-American than the other members of that group.

In an era in which too many nation-states have preached the virtues of multilateralism and pooled sovereignty, Singapore has remained both independent and highly successful, proving that with the right skill and leadership, the nation-state can not only survive but prosper.

Ironically, the past few months have seen the stirrings of nation-state passions in the very country that was once Singapore's colonial master, the United Kingdom. There is a growing prospect that Britain will vote to leave the European Union, something that would have been unthinkable five years ago. Much will depend on what emerges from Prime Minister David Cameron's negotiations with EU leaders as the terms on which Britain might remain in the EU.

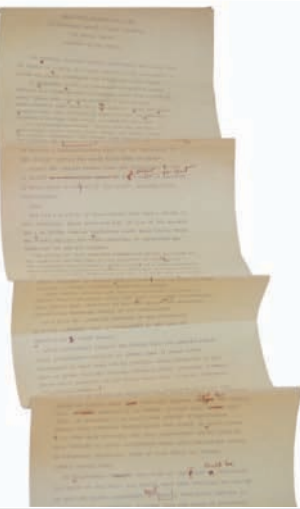
Those who are horrified at the prospect of a "Brexit" usually base their arguments for Britain's EU membership on economics. Important though this consideration may be, it doesn't address the growing sense in the United Kingdom that key features of EU membership constitute an affront to British sovereignty.

It was always understood that Britain would have to surrender some sovereignty when she joined Europe. Yet in the halcyon pro-European 1970s, this didn't seem to matter so much. There were to be massive benefits—and wasn't the world moving toward greater multilateralism in any case? Forty years on, as Britain faces different challenges, such as homegrown terrorism and pressures on unchecked immigration, a very different attitude prevails.

Contrary to what the advocates of the European project with both China and Japan, despite ongoing tensions between asserted, the European Union has reduced, not increased, those two erstwhile enemies, has derived from a capacity to Europe's global power. Consensus to act is difficult to achieve among so many nations. And membership in the wider group The refugee crisis now burdening Europe is a humanitarian constrains initiatives by individual states or is used as an excuse for inertia.

It rankles many Britons that the nation's courts are subordinated to the European Court of Justice. Likewise, Britain is unable to negotiate her own trade agreements directly with the other nations, especially in the rapidly growing Asia-Pacific region. These considerations, coupled with almost daily reminders that Britain no longer controls her own borders, have

One day WFB called articles editor Kevin Lynch and told him to look out the window. Presently a scroll descended from Bill's balcony on the third floor to Kevin's window on the second floor. It was an eagerly awaited article from former governor Ronald Reagan, which had come in on the continuous paper used by fax machines in those days.



seemed to matter several decades ago, when multilateral free-trade agreements such as the World Trade Organization's Doha Development Agenda were in vogue. But Doha has failed, and, increasingly, bilateral agreements that reflect international norms of openness are the preferred route.

Thus, a celebration of a half century of Singaporean success as a nation-state, together with a growing resentment within Britain that she no longer has all the attributes of a nation-state, reminds us that we still live in a world of nation-states. To pretend otherwise is delusional.

In my time as prime minister of Australia, I measured the foreign-policy successes of my government according to the health of a series of important bilateral relationships, not by the intensity of our multilateral activities.

Australia's relations with Indonesia have always been problematic. That country not only is our nearest neighbor but is fundamentally different from us in population, culture, religion, and political heritage. It is the most populous Islamic country in the world. Guiding Australia's relationship with Indonesia through such difficult challenges as the Asian financial meltdown, the independence of East Timor, and the terrorist attacks in Bali was in every way a bilateral challenge. In each instance, it was a case of two nation-states reaching an understanding with each other. The cooperation between our security forces in fighting Islamic terrorism, for example, was due entirely to the negotiations of the two nations, their leaders, and the government agencies. It owed nothing to regional associations, valuable as those were in other contexts.

Likewise, Australia's success in strengthening her relations



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compassion and hard-headedness. The most needy deserve shelter and comfort, yet a completely open-door policy will only magnify the problem.

This refugee challenge reminds all European nations that the right to control one's borders is a basic element of national sovereignty. Fourteen years ago, I declared, during an election campaign, that "we will decide who will come to this country and the circumstances in which they come." It struck a chord with the Australian people. It came at a time when unauthorized asylum seekers were threatening the historic support of the Australian people for high levels of immigration to our country, as well as the maintenance of a generous and humanitarian refugee policy.

#### MY FIRST ISSUE OF NR

Being an immigrant—legal—I didn't know anything about NATIONAL REVIEW until the early 1990s, when I regularly took the US Airways shuttle between La Guardia and D.C. In those days, the airline offered travelers a wide range of free publications, and I tried NATIONAL REVIEW. It made an immediate impact. The articles resonated with so much that I was seeing and feeling about what was wrong with the Clinton administration.

The free NR on the shuttle seems to have gone the way of so many frequent-flier perks, but I am eternally grateful for it.

IAN DUNCAN  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIF.



NIALL FERGUSON

## What Would Eisenhower Do?

My government's policy worked. The illegal arrivals, often on fragile boats—many of which sank, taking lives with them—were stopped. This was done through a combination of intercepting and turning around boats when safe to do so as well as processing asylum seekers offshore from Australia. A subsequent government reversed this policy, with disastrous consequences. But when a later government restored our earlier policy, the Australian people felt that their government again controlled their borders.

Support for immigration continues to be strong in Australia, and our people continue to support a generous refugee policy. A measure of this generosity is the willingness of Australia to receive 12,000 Syrian refugees.

There is a basic public-policy point here. My long experience in Australian politics has been that whenever a government is seen to have immigration flows under control, public support for immigration increases. When the reverse occurs, hostility to immigration rises. With this in mind, I am sure that many of the member states of the European Union now wish that they still had complete control of their borders.

The Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War, established the nation-state as the main organizing principle of world affairs. Across the world, there is plenty of contemporary evidence that the instinct to preserve that principle remains as strong as ever.

AMERICAN foreign policy today is in disarray. Faced with three major challenges to Western democracy—a restive Russia, an economically ascendant China, and Islamic extremism emanating from a strife-torn Middle East—President Obama has struggled to formulate a coherent strategy. His September 28 address to the United Nations General Assembly summed up the conceptual confusion that has bedeviled his presidency. He spent most of his speech scolding Iran, Russia, and China for their various transgressions. But he concluded by saying he was "prepared to work with any nation, including Russia and Iran, to resolve the conflict" in Syria.

Obama admitted that he had left "a vacuum" in Libya by ensuring the fall of Moammar Qaddafi. But the president's ideal outcome in Syria remains "a managed transition away from Assad." In his U.N. speech, Obama alluded disdainfully to the rule that applied for most of human history . . . that strong states must impose their will on weaker ones." But his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, is showing him that weak states can sometimes impose their will on stronger ones if they know the rudiments of strategy.

*Mr. Ferguson is the author of Kissinger: 1923–1968: The Idealist, which has just been published.*



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They did things very differently 60 years ago, when a retired five-star general was president—a man who, behind his country-club exterior, understood strategy better than almost anyone in his generation. In short, despite its manifest strength, the United States in the mid 1950s felt menaced by the Soviet Union: militarily, economically, internally, technologically, and geopolitically.

In deciding how best to respond, Eisenhower considered three strategic options: to maintain the status quo; to complete the defense perimeter that would have encircled the Sino-Soviet Union as it began to close the nuclear gap. In August 1953, the Soviets tested their first hydrogen bomb. “Ike understood what that signaled. ‘Let me tell you that if war comes, it will be horrible,’ he told South Korean president Syngman Rhee in 1954. ‘Atomic war will destroy civilization. . . . There will be millions of people dead. . . . The consequences are too horrible to contemplate. I can’t even imagine them.’” The top-secret assessment a year and a half later persuaded him that—as he summarized the assessment’s claims—in the wake of a full-blown nuclear war, “something on the order of 65 percent of the [U.S.] population would require some kind of medical care, and in most instances, [would have] no opportunity whatsoever to get it. . . . It would literally be a business of digging ourselves out of the ashes, starting again.”

Eisenhower also feared the economic consequences of an unbridled arms race. “Spiritual force, multiplied by military force, is roughly equal to secular force,” he wrote in his diary. If the cost of the arms race would be self-defeating. What was more, the Soviet threat . . . to force upon America and the free world unbearable security burdens leading to economic disaster.” include Ike’s “Chance for Peace” speech of April 16, 1953, sincerely lamented the expense of the arms race. (“The cost of modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities.”)

The Soviet threat took multiple forms in the 1950s. Though the best advance U.S. security interests.” He repeatedly told the Senator Joseph McCarthy gave anti-Communism a bad name. There was legitimate public anxiety about what Eisenhower himself called an “organization in [our] midst which, purports to be a political party within the normally accepted meaning, is actually a conspiracy dedicated to the violent overthrow of our entire form of government.”

With the successful launch of *Sputnik 1*, the first artificial satellite, in October 1957, the Soviets appeared to be catching up not only in military terms but technologically, too. And, Asia Treaty Organization of 1954 looked superficially like an ally, they appeared to be gaining the upper hand in what would become known as the Third World.

As the European empires fell apart or dismantled themselves in the great post-war scramble to “decolonize,” Moscow saw a huge opportunity. In January 1961, Khrushchev explicitly pledged Soviet support for “national wars of liberation.” The idea was to ride the wave of decolonization by repackaging the United States as the ally of all revolutionaries and branding the United States as the new imperialist. It looked like a winning strategy. “Almost any one of the new-born states of the world,” grumbled Eisenhower, “would rather embrace Communism or any other form of dictatorship than ship than . . . acknowledge the political domination of another government.” The “new countries” reminded him of a row of dominoes waiting to topple one after another—an image that would prove one of the most enduring of the Cold War.

Likewise, there was broad congressional support for Eisenhower’s vaguely worded resolution of January 1957, which pledged the United States to defend “the Middle East” against “overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism.” But how exactly was such aggression to be resisted? Limited nuclear war—using tactical nukes to check the vast Red Army—was an option that was never used, so we shall never know whether such a war would have escalated into Armageddon. But Ike had other options, too. Rather than being drawn into fighting multiple Korean-style wars, Eisenhower preferred to rely on what was then known as “psychological warfare”—a huge campaign of “gray” and “black” propaganda and covert operations. South Vietnam was flooded with anti-





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Communist literature produced by the United States Info (killed by drone strikes since 2009.) The difference is that today the National Security Agency; North Vietnam was penetrated by CIA-trained saboteurs and provocateurs; Indonesia, Laos, and Thailand First, the Obama administration seems inclined to underestimate the magnitude of the threats we face. Testifying in February before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Secretary of State John Kerry called it “counterintuitive but . . . true” that “our citizens, our world today is actually, despite ISIL, despite the visible killings that you see and how horrific they are, we are actually living in a period of less daily threat to Americans and to people in the world than normally—less deaths, less violent deaths today than through the last century.” This might have been plausible in 2010, but since that time there has been a roughly fourfold increase in worldwide fatalities from armed conflict and a sixfold increase in fatalities from terrorism.

When persuasion failed, the alternative was subversion. To the CIA director Allen Dulles and his contemporaries, who had learned their craft during World War II and had then watched the United States General Assembly on September 28, “we understand that the United States cannot solve the world’s problems alone.”

Perhaps the most striking difference between now and then is **this administration’s deep reluctance** to call an ideological enemy by its real name.

The overthrow of Iranian prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh had in fact been a British initiative following his Syrian “red line” crisis that the United States is “not the world’s policeman.” The problem is that the states the president wants to work with—the likes of Russia and Iran—are not interested in police work. Rather the opposite. In Guatemala, the initiative came from an American business interest, the United Fruit Company, which had been nationalized by Jacobo Arbenz after his election in 1951. The CIA organized a military coup that overthrew Arbenz, mistakenly fabricating and spreading the Eisenhower signed into law in August 1954 was explicit. In the story that he was a Kremlin stooge. This kind of operation was confirmed as legitimate by NSC 5412, approved by Eisenhower on March 15, 1954, which entrusted responsibility for planning covert operations to Dulles but ensured that the White House, the State Department, and the Defense Department had the right of approval through the so-called Special Group, composed of the National Security Council.

When Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba in January 1959, those who slander the prophet of Islam” in 2012 to “ISIL is not then, it was only natural that the CIA should begin work on Islamic” in 2014. operation to get rid of him, too. As deputy director for plans, ebullient Richard Bissell was quite ready to contemplate assassinations, not only of Castro but also of Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic and Patrice Lumumba, the Congolese prime minister. Though those who killed Trujillo and Lumumba were not themselves CIA agents, the weapons they used were supplied by the agency.

The big difference between then and now is not that the United States has forgotten how to do such nasty things. On the contrary, modern technology makes it far easier for the CIA to carry out targeted assassinations than it was 60 years ago. Wonder, unjustly, why the United States has not done more to arrest the decline of American strategy and power. **NR**



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MARK HELPRIN

# Dangers on The Horizon



Text

**I**N these days that in many ways are similar to the years of decadence and blindness foreshadowing the two great wars of the past century, our attentions are focused mainly on internal dangers to the republic. As they gather strength from victory to victory, we are witness to a geometrically accelerating descent of culture, the enthusiastic burial of tradition, an educational system enchained in political cant and sexual claptrap, and a constant tide of attacks upon religion, constitutionalism, individual responsibility and initiative, the free market, and American nationhood itself. The chaos of this sparking decay is reminiscent of what one can see when flying at night over widespread thunderstorms. Distant lightning strikes scattered in the darkness are like fireflies on a June lawn: As soon they light, they disappear as others flash elsewhere. Because each is destructive, disorienting, and part of the same storm, it is impossible to prioritize them.

By the same token, one cannot have a strong defense without a strong economy, which cannot exist for long without the disinterested rule of law, which in this country cannot exist absent constitutionalism, which cannot exist without decent education, which cannot exist in a putrefying culture—this order being by no means a hierarchy but only one thread in a web of interdependency that heretofore has provided Americans, if unevenly, with

*Mr. Helprin, the author of *Winter's Tale* and *A Soldier of the Great War*, is a senior fellow at the Claremont Institute, a defense consultant, and a veteran of military service in the Middle East.*

safety, prosperity, dignity, and purpose. All are necessary and none alone is sufficient.

Thus the beleaguered condition, as in fighting a swarm of bees, of that segment of the electorate, the Right, that neither believes everything is going swimmingly nor is content with just bread and circuses. Like a presidential candidate who must appeal to every facet of what he hopes to forge into coalition, people often suffer through the confusion of addressing everything at once. But in so doing they mostly relegate to equal or inferior status the one factor most influential upon all the others and recognized by the Founders as *primus inter pares*—defense, for the simple reason that without it the others cannot exist.

Whether by distraction, ideology, hostility, an impulse to suicide, or simply ignorance of history, we are steadily creating the conditions for either a major lost war that suddenly and radically will alter both our position in the international system and our way of life, or a spiritless twilight of surrender that will have the same effect, and into which the present administration has led our first steps. Lost in the clutter of materialism and the disharmony of our many arguments, we have become blind to a great wave that builds beyond the horizon.



In 1991, President George H. W. Bush, who had been a friend of WFB's since their days at Yale, bestowed on him the Medal of Freedom, citing him as "a tireless worker in the vineyards of liberty."

War breaks the hearts of families and nations. It upends economies, often stimulating but distorting them as well, and other than in exceptional circumstances leading to debt that can be sustained only by the diminution of the nation itself. War enslaves populations to a cause, creates unbearable grief and suffering, and can break political consensus and harmony for generations. Think of what the past 14 years of very limited war have brought, and then consider the potential effects of a nuclear detonation in a major city; an EMP attack resulting in helpless anarchy and scores of millions dead; an epidemic of newly emerging pathogens that would fell similar millions; a long, hard-fought struggle with an ascendant major power; a nuclear exchange with an emerging or established nuclear power; or the insidious and expanding consequences of the continual boil-over in the Middle East.

Though these dangers may not be entirely clear or immediately present, they are on their way, and we are neither prepared nor even holding against the pressure of their approach. As Europe dissolves and cannot mount its own defense, Russia strengthens and probes. Iran has built a toxic, genocidal bridge from Afghanistan to the Mediterranean. If Israel doesn't strike, Iran will underwrite its attempt to dominate the Arab and Islamic worlds with both the power of nuclear weapons (now, incredibly, in effect guaranteed by the West) and the reappearance of



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Stuart Holzer

Russia in the Middle East, a highly dangerous non-inevitability prevented, until President Obama, by every administration since Nixon's. China will neither relinquish its aggressive claim to the South China Sea nor allow economic dislocation to anything but slow the momentum of its military build-up. There are just the beginnings of challenges that, absent our own counter-preparations, promise to be overwhelming.

Not only is our response totally insufficient, this administration and our elites, and the bulk of European governments and their elites, are throwing open the gates. If you are an enemy of the West, you can spit in their faces and they will lick your boots, confining their aggressive and critical impulses to their own peoples and foundational principles.

And yet we can indeed have once again the sound political sense, political solidarity, and necessary armaments to deter our enemies and, if deterrence fails, soundly defeat them. But we lack perspective, sobriety, the will to self-preservation, and



#### MY FIRST ISSUE OF NR

My first exposure to NR occurred in about 1994. I'm not sure why I got a subscription solicitation, since nothing about me at that time indicated that I was a prospective customer, but I did. I was then a longtime, hard-core leftist who was beginning to wonder about his politics after a couple of years teaching in the famous(ly bad) Kansas City magnet schools. What I "knew" did not correspond to the cold and ugly reality I faced every day, and after some time trying to change reality, I decided that maybe it was my thinking that needed updating. I was also starting to recognize the truth in Christianity's outrageous claims. Tumult.

One day this solicitation for a pretty expensive magazine I had never heard of showed up. I could not afford it and wrote back saying so. I got a real letter from someone who told me that NR had a fund just for such people, a sort of scholarship for the needy poor. I received that for one year and have paid my own way ever since.

And used the magazine in my classroom!

**JIM CLARK**  
OVERLAND PARK, KAN.

ANDREW C. McCARTHY

## Our Bungled War on Terror

**S**PEAKING to a joint session of Congress a week after nearly 3,000 Americans were killed in the 9/11 atrocities, President George W. Bush outlined the only strategy that has ever had a chance of winning the "war on terror." The plan, which became known as the Bush doctrine, had two simple steps: The United States would hunt down terrorist organizations—meaning, violent jihadists—wherever on earth they set up shop; and nations that harbored terrorists would be treated as terrorists—meaning, that the United States would pressure rogue regimes until they reformed or were ousted.

Fourteen years later, the administration of President Barack Obama has inked a multilateral agreement that makes the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, a threshold nuclear power. Sanctions relief provides it with a \$150 billion windfall that, the mullahs crow, will be used to continue underwriting Hezbollah, Hamas, and their other jihadist cohorts. The trillions spent and lives sacrificed in years of war against jihadists in Iraq and Afghanistan have been squandered with the former country now essentially surrendered to Tehran while the latter is gradually returning to the Taliban—which Obama gifted with a seat at the Afghanistan negotiation table and the release of its detained commanders.



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even as the jihadists continued conducting offensive operations at night, and striking the Pentagon, the center of American military might. But this was not America circa 1941. The schizophrenic Bush administration placed the nation on a war footing while rhetorically absolving Islam, a main- because much of the territory has been seized, and the border- stream, virulently anti-Western interpretation of which doc- erated, by the Islamic State (also known as ISIS, or ISIL— the ally underpins jihadist terror.

The map of what used to be Iraq and Syria must be redrawn, war footing while rhetorically absolving Islam, a main- because much of the territory has been seized, and the border- stream, virulently anti-Western interpretation of which doc- erated, by the Islamic State (also known as ISIS, or ISIL— the ally underpins jihadist terror. Of course, sharia supremacism is far from the only con- fession of al-Qaeda that originated as the terror network's fr- action of Islam, and Muslims by the tens of millions reject chise in Iraq, ISIS is building its caliphate by barbaric con- it, struggle to reform it, or are indifferent to it. The desire to quest, a rampage in which Christians and other religious avoid alienating them was (and remains) prudent. Yet what minorities are programmatically enslaved, raped, crucified, seized Washington was not merely a prudent desire; it was a politically correct obsession, a mulish determination to avoid

ISIS's mother ship—turned—rival, al-Qaeda, is also thriving grasping the ideology that knits disparate Islamist factions Notwithstanding Obama's risible claims to have put the org together against their perceived enemies: non-Muslims, par- nization on "the path to defeat," its tentacles now reach far the- narily the United States, Israel, and Europe. than they did in the pre-9/11 days, particularly in the Arabian Willful blindness about the nature of a threat does not make Peninsula and northern Africa—in hubs such as Libya, a not- the threat go away; it creates a void of thought and strategy.

### MY FIRST ISSUE OF NR

I found NATIONAL REVIEW in the college library at the University of Vermont my freshman year, '73-'74. It had cartoons, it had reviews of current books and movies, and it had Bill Buckley, whom I'd been reading in the news- papers since I was nine (I was a precocious child—my mother uses a different term). It was the only publication that maintained that America was ruled by the Consti- tution rather than a Senate committee, CBS News, and the *New York Times*. And it had style.

Several years later, I would have occasion to wipe the dust off Bill Buckley's photograph in the Officer Candi- date School Hall of Fame at Fort Benning, Ga. I read NR in the library there, too.

DAVID TAGGART  
CALHOUN, GA.

In the matter of grappling with Islamic extremism, that void has been filled by delusion and opportunism. With a shroud over the enemy's convictions—its belief in a divine sum- mons to implement and spread sharia, by violence when nec- essary; its aim to conquer America and the West, just as it believes it conquered the Soviet Union—alternative theories of Islamic aggression gained currency.

The center-right settled on fantasy: Islam is a "religion of peace" with no intrinsic summons to aggression; hence, the correlation of Islam and terrorism was mere happenstance, not causation. Indeed, terrorism was nonsensically reframed as "violent extremism"—as if the violence were causing itself. Government officials in the United States and Europe even referred to jihadist brutality as "anti-Islamic" activity. The Bush doctrine was refurbished to prescribe Islam as the solution to our security problem, not a significant contribu- tor to it. Campaigns to defeat the enemy by military and intelligence operations morphed into exercises in sharia- democracy—building, on the bien-pensant theory that Western liberty and Islamic law were seamlessly compatible. (The new constitutions of Afghanistan and Iraq, which the U.S.

failed state where a terrorist attack on the eleventh anniversary of 9/11 killed the U.S. ambassador and three other American officials. State Department helped draft, explicitly incorporate sharia as governing law. Although they also include Western human-rights guarantees, they provide that no law that con-

Meanwhile, the world's most influential Islamist organiza- tion, the Muslim Brotherhood, has been ousted from power in Egypt—no thanks to the Obama administration, which cham- pioned its accession despite its commitment to install sharia- Islam's repressive legal code, and its ardent support of Hamas, the Brotherhood's Palestinian branch. The Brothers- the pursuit of U.S. interests; the treatment of terrorism as a make headway in other states—including Turkey, our NATO ally" whose Islamist government is a staunch Brotherhood supporter—and throughout the West, where the Brotherhood has spent three generations building an impressive political, financial, educational, and social infrastructure. American alliance with Israel and support of its purported "occupation" of "Palestine"; and the failure to engage Iran, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, a bloc of 57 sharia-promoting Muslim countries hostile to Israel and free speech.

How have we gone from a sound strategy to a catastrophe? The most succinct answer is that the Bush doctrine, for all its elegant simplicity, proved too difficult for our modern cul- ture to apply. The 9/11 attacks were devastating than the growing threat, of enabling and empowering the enemy. If the bombing of Pearl Harbor—killing more Americans, destroying the Twin Towers, an iconic symbol of American economic might if we opened our eyes.

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Text



MONA CHAREN

# The Apology Policy

**P**RESIDENT BARACK OBAMA strutted into the Oval Office utterly convinced of his moral rectitude. Unlike predecessors, Obama would make policy based on an exquisitely calibrated conscience, sensitivity to constitutional norms, and a capacious vision of international unity. Among his first official acts was to sign Executive Order 13492, calling for the Guantanamo Bay detention facilities to be closed within one year. Terrorists would henceforth be handled “in a manner that is consistent with our values and ideals.” *The New York Times* swooned.

He spoke for most of the Democratic party—certainly the Left. The late Howard Zinn, *People’s History of the United States* is still widely assigned in American high schools and colleges, saw the War on Terror as yet another opportunity for American aggression. “Terrorism has replaced Communism as the rationale for the militarization of the country, for military adventures abroad, and for the suppression of civil liberties at home,” he wrote. “It serves the same purpose, righting wrongs to create hysteria.”

A particular kind of blinkered moral preening characterizes the Left’s critique of America. Always on guard against domestic xenophobia—after 9/11, many rushed to decry an anti-Muslim backlash that never actually happened—it channels its moral energies into seeking forgiveness from foreign powers against which the U.S. has supposedly sinned.

While doctrinaire leftists are full of righteous wrath about Western imperialism, slavery, racism, and the rest, they audaciously ignore the slavery, racism, and imperialism of their own civilizations. Arab traders enslaved untold millions of Africans

Asians, and Europeans over the centuries. Japan’s wartime propaganda was steeped in racial superiority, and the yoke of Ottoman imperialism on non-Muslims could be harsh. The massacres of Greeks and Armenians at Turkish hands belong in the tragic annals of genocide.

The U.S., like every other nation, has many crimes in its history. But very few of them are recent, and no Democrat is proposing to return the American Southwest to Mexico as penance for an expansionist war. It’s precisely our recent history that the Left views astigmatically. John Kerry proclaims proudly that the U.S. will no longer “dictate” to others, as if the world had been living in fear of American aggression.

In fact, while the U.S. has committed its share of blunders in foreign policy, it has, since World War II, more or less consistently deployed its power to shield the weak from the strong. American power was arrayed to protect Western Europe, Greece, and Turkey from the Soviet Union; South Korea from North Korea; South Vietnam from North Vietnam; Taiwan, Japan, and the Philippines from China and the USSR; and Israel from a host of enemies. Along the way, the U.S. extended sup-

## MY FIRST ISSUE OF NR

The first time I saw a copy of *NATIONAL REVIEW* was after a football game at my high school, Manheim Township High School, in Neffsville, Pa. It was the fall of 1968 and I was a senior and a trumpet player in the band.

After the game, a fellow band member and I were talking in the parking lot and he showed me a copy of *NR* because we both were on the high-school-newspaper staff and interested in politics. I don’t think it was a big deal back then in conservative Lancaster County, Pa., but today it would probably be like sharing a copy of *Playboy* magazine.

**MARK STALNECKER**  
CENTREVILLE, DEL.

held democratic movements in the Philippines, Kurdistan, Africa, Latin America, and beyond. It has come to the rescue of Grenada, Kuwait, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Somalia.

This streak has been broken now. One of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s first acts was to reassure China that human rights did not top the Obama administration’s list of concerns.

“It is essential that the United States and China have a partnership, a cooperative relationship,” Clinton said. “Successive administrations and Chinese governments have been poised back and forth on these [human-rights] issues, and we have continued to press them. But our pressing on those issues cannot interfere with the global economic crisis, the global climate-change crisis, and the security crisis.”

Obama has “reset” relations with Russia, a nation that jails and murders opposition leaders, commits atrocities in Chechnya, seizes the Crimean Peninsula, assists separatists in chopping off chunks of Ukraine and shooting a commercial jetliner out of the sky, props up Bashar al-Assad in Syria, sends advanced anti-aircraft weapons to Iran, and scares Poland and the Baltic states out of their wits.

*Mona Charen is a nationally syndicated columnist and a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.*



We, the “guilty” nation eager to make amends, now offer Castro’s Cuba business, diplomatic recognition, and hard cash. In exchange for this, the Cuban regime gives nothing and continues to brutally suppress democratic dissidents. About this, the Left is silent.

In the Middle East, the administration has taken to treating Israel and traditional American allies with contempt while wrapping its arms around Iran, the world’s leading sponsor of terrorism. Through their concordat with the Islamic Republic, the administration and the Democratic party also find themselves, in effect, on the side of Assad’s Syria, which receives crucial support from Iran. That, in turn, strengthens the hands of ISIS, which can claim to be the Sunni strong horse against the Syria–Iran–Russia alliance.

When not truckling to enemies outright, the Left’s foreign-policy thinkers rock gently in a dream world. They imagine that American interventionism is the original sin and are guided by the vacuous maxim “Don’t do stupid [stuff]”—the words with which White House officials are reported to have described Obama’s approach to world affairs. They fancy that wars can be “ended” regardless of whether the enemy shares this desire and believe that appeasement will soften the hardest adversary. The “tide war is receding,” pronounced the deluded commander-in-chief as hundreds of thousands of Syrians were blasted by Iranian-supplied barrel bombs and millions of refugees spilled into neighboring states; as the Taliban recaptured Afghan cities America had liberated; as ISIS gained control of Iraqi oil fields, gibbeted children for breaking the Ramadan fast, and smashed ancient, irreplaceable treasures in Palmyra; as Christians and Yazidis were murdered for their beliefs, women forced into sex slavery, and hostages beheaded or burned alive before the entire world.

A modest United States, stooping under the weight of past offenses, has reduced its military to levels not seen since the 1930s. While technology has altered the calculus of naval power, numbers still matter. Last year, Admiral Jonathan Greenert, then chief of naval operations, testified that the Navy would need 450 ships to meet its worldwide missions; today it has 289, half as many as it did in the last years of the administration. China, among other rivals, has noticed. It harasses the Philippines, Japan, and Vietnam, and builds artificial islands in the South China Sea from which to take control of disputed territories. “It’s my sense that some nations view freedom of the seas as up for grabs,” observed Admiral Scott Swift, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. It doesn’t take long for the vultures to circle.

A diminished America has given rise to chaos and acute suffering. The “hands off” policy in Syria and total withdrawal of troops from Iraq have together created a human-rights catastrophe for the region and an immigration crisis of historic proportions for Europe. The flowering of ISIS in the ungoverned regions of Iraq and Syria is a horror flick come to life, while the nuclear deal’s aggrandizement of Iran plunges the world into a potential nightmare of proliferation or even nuclear war.

Doing penance for imaginary American crimes, the Democratic Left has inflicted real harm. As a geopolitical matter, the decline of American power has made the world a far more chaotic and dangerous place. And as a moral matter, American diffidence has spelled misery and death for hundreds of thousands of human beings, and may yet condemn millions more.



DAVID PRYCE-JONES

# The Mideast’s Plastic Hour

“PLASTIC hour,” in Karl Marx’s useful phrase, occurs when the course of events is so confused and confusing that it could go this way or that, which is the case right now as millions of Muslims flee the Middle East to reach wherever, anywhere, in Europe. One in four or five are genuine refugees from the fighting in Syria and Iraq. The majority are migrants out to better their circumstances. Taken together, their arrival day after day is a standing vote of no confidence in their own countries. This is a collective phenomenon. An undefined new order struggling to be born out of a civilization that refuses to die. As a correspondent during the Six-Day War of June 1967 between Israel and its Arab neighbors, I happened to witness just such a collective phenomenon, admittedly on a scale far smaller than today’s. Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank—until that moment under Jordanian rule—were leaving their homes en masse, abandoning the elderly and infirm, their livestock and their possessions, sometimes with dishes still warm on the table and an empty house, in order to cross a rickety wooden bridge into Jordan. Their fears and hopes were unreal. They believed that Moshe Dayan, the general in charge of Israeli military operations, would massacre and disperse them, as strongmen in the Middle East are accustomed to do. I stopped a few families in flight to try to explain that they were bound to be worse off with no control of their lives in unknown hands. Nobody paid attention. The shuttered expression on their faces has stayed with me. Only a few weeks later, Yasser Arafat began the armed cam-

NR

paign that made him the strongman of the Palestinians and put tion, he materialized in the summer of last year at the head of a paid to any idea of peace and a return to former homes. body of armed men who took the city of Mosul by surprise and

In the recent death-throe years, Iran, Turkey, and Egypt, the established a power base. Black banners identify them as Sunni major Muslim nation-states in the Middle East, have all three Muslims supposedly doing battle on religious grounds with alternated between Islamism and secular nationalism. Yet whatever Bashar al-Assad and his Iranian sponsors, all defined as Shiites. the ideology is supposed to be, coups, rigged elections, control of Conquering and occupying a large area of Syria and Iraq, and the media, and institutional injustice of every kind are character- proclaiming himself caliph of a revived caliphate (also known as istics common to all at all times. Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip the Islamic State, "Da'esh" in Arabic), Baghdadi exploits reli- Erdogan, and Egypt's president, Abdul Fattah al-Sisi, profess belief gious faith in order to engage in a classic territorial dispute. systems that are incompatible, yet they are identical when it comes Imposed ostensibly for the faith, sharia, Muslim law as ordained to rewriting the constitution to suit themselves. The shah of Iran by the Koran, is merely an instrument of control.

was certainly guilty of abusing civil rights, but the ayatollahs who deposed him have ordered the murder of protesters on a far larger and more arbitrary scale. Putting down the so-called Green Revolution, they were evidently able and willing to commit a massacre. A prisoner accused in an Iranian court of the meaningless charges of "waging war on God" and "corrupting the earth" is facing a death sentence. A prisoner accused in a Saudi court of "violating Islamic values" is likely to be beheaded. Saddam Hussein spoke for every Muslim strongman when he defined law as "two lines above my signature." In practice, it makes no difference to the victim if the executioner or torturer is wearing a turban or a military peaked cap with braid.

Between approximately 2008 and 2012, upheavals in at least ten Arab and Muslim countries resulted in estimated totals of 34,500 people shot and killed, 60,000 wounded, and 600,000 refugees. Giving birth to nothing, the Arab Spring turned out to be an extension of the lingering deathbed condition, yet another last gasp. In the case of Libya, no strongman has emerged after the lynching of where already swear allegiance to the caliph. Baghdadi likes to say Moammar Qaddafi, and therefore daily life is a Hobbesian free-for-all without even some arbitrary law.

Civil war in Syria and the hapless foreign policy of the great "It's our dream that there should be a caliphate not only in Syria but powers gave the anonymous preacher who goes by the name of in all the world, and we will have it soon, God willing." And still Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi his opportunity. In a textbook illustration the United States and its allies are unable to decide whether these of the way strongmen have always risen in this Muslim civiliza- are little local disturbances or a genuine collective phenomenon.



The Triple Bifurcated Chauvinator was a gift to WFB from an admirer, to assist in enthusiastic flag-waving.

Such a career has no moral aspect. The supreme but unwritten law has it that the sole effective response to opposition is a higher level of brutality. A captured Jordanian pilot was locked into a cage and burned alive in one of numerous public executions. In front of other intimidated spectators, an 82-year-old archaeologist was beheaded in Palmyra, the Greco-Roman ruin that had been his life's study. Two small boys were gibbeted for eating during the hours of daylight fasting that is a religious obligation during the month of Ramadan. Homosexuals, their hands tied behind their back, are thrown off tall buildings to their death; Yazidis, a defenseless minority with doctrines and rites ultimately derived from Islam, are forced at gunpoint out of their homes, and any captured women sold into sex slavery. Intelligence sources estimate that at least 30,000 young Muslims, male and female, have arrived as volunteers for jihad from about 90 countries; on some days as many as ten suicide bombers coordinate operations to blow themselves up. It works.

Commanders and their militias in Libya, Mali, Nigeria, and elsewhere already swear allegiance to the caliph. Baghdadi likes to say that he will be capturing New York and Rome, by which he means the complete Christian world. One of his spokesmen goes further:

When NATIONAL REVIEW published its first issue, a tiny group of thinkers, activists, and politicians made up the conservative movement. Since then, it has grown into a major force in American life. Herewith, a timeline of 60 turning points that, over 60 years, marked or made possible its success.

NOVEMBER 19, 1955



NATIONAL REVIEW is published for the first time. Its 29-year-old editor, William F. Buckley Jr., says the magazine "stands athwart history, yelling Stop, at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urge it." Buckley edits NATIONAL REVIEW for the next 35 years, making it the nation's leading conservative periodical.

OCTOBER 10, 1957

Random House publishes Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*, a dystopian novel that galvanizes libertarians and proves enduringly popular. A brutal review by Whittaker Chambers in NATIONAL REVIEW highlights divisions between conservatives and libertarians.

OCTOBER 1, 1958

Aaron Director founds *The Journal of Law and Economics*, launching the most important legal movement in the post-war period. It contends that laws must be evaluated by their economic consequences in addition to their ability to dispense justice.

SEPTEMBER 11, 1960

Young Americans for Freedom holds its first meeting and adopts the Sharon Statement, an expression of conservative principles emphasizing political and economic liberty. Written by M. Stanton Evans, it takes its name from the Connecticut town where Buckley lives.



Syria and Iraq have ceased to exist within the borders created by the British and French a hundred years ago. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed in both countries, and millions more have fled with no prospect of returning. Europe discovered the collective phenomenon of migration when it was too late to do anything much about it. A middle-ranking Austrian bureaucrat in Brussels with the name of Johannes Hahn and the title of Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy announced, “There are 20 million refugees waiting at the doorstep of Europe”—35 million, according to another estimate. Panicking, Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, set about imposing quotas for refugees that EU countries are obliged to accept.

It falls to Uzay Bulut, a Turkish journalist (and a born Muslim) well known for her courage and integrity, to ask, “Why should Europe be expected to commit suicide and turn into yet another Muslim land where lives and liberties have no value?” Ninety-six percent of Germans questioned for a poll were in favor of immigration, seemingly out of pity for the underdog and guilt at the general refusal to save the victims of Nazism in the years when it was still possible to do so. At first, Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, said that borders were to stay open and that Germany would accept 800,000 refugees this year. Large numbers of sentimental folk welcomed trains delivering refugees to stations—20,000 on one particular day in Munich alone. But then officials in the various German Länder, or provinces, responsible for the reception and settlement of refugees protested that the system has collapsed under the weight of immigration. Over a weekend, Mrs. Merkel switched policy and closed the frontiers.

One civilizational crisis provokes another. The Hungarian prime minister, Viktor Orban, holds that the Ottoman-Turkish occupation of the country centuries ago is the precedent to bear in mind. Hungary remains a Christian country. Highly critical of Germany and the EU, Orban delivers challenges such as: “We do not like the consequences of having a large number of Muslim communities that we see in other countries, and I do not see any reason for anyone to force us to create ways of living together in Hungary that we do not want to see.” A razor-wire fence along the border between Hungary and Serbia replaces the Iron Curtain of Soviet days. Refugees are allowed only to transit Hungary on their way to Germany or Austria. Politicians and officials constructing what looks like the European Spring treat Orban as an outcast, but public opinion, especially in once-Sovietized Eastern Europe, by and large supports him. And still the refugees and migrants keep coming, and the plastic hour lengthens—just as once the waves of the ocean paid no attention to King Canute’s directives. **NR**

PETER TURNLEY/CORBIS



JOHN McWHORTER

# Black America And the Right

**W**HILE not as uncommon as popularly supposed, the black conservative is ever considered an oxymoron, thought by most people left of center to be deluded at best and evil at worst—and certainly “self-hating.”

As someone who would have been readily classified as liberal on race in about 1960 but who disagrees with the leftist swing of civil-rights orthodoxy since, I have broken bread with conservatives extensively. I am therefore often regarded as a “black conservative” and have been bemused that many reasonable people have sincerely believed that I express my views solely in a quest for lucrative speaking engagements.

*Mr. McWhorter teaches linguistics, philosophy, American studies, and music history at Columbia University. His latest book is The Language Hoax.*

FEBRUARY 13, 1962

Buckley begins a series of attacks on the John Birch Society, which he accuses of “damaging the cause of anticommunism.” Buckley’s efforts isolate a fringe element from the conservative movement and confirm the serious purpose of modern conservatism.

**JBS**

JULY 16, 1964

Barry Goldwater receives the Republican presidential nomination. “Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice,” says the Arizona senator in his acceptance speech. “And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.” His nomination marks the first success of conservatives within the ranks of the GOP.

OCTOBER 27, 1964

Ronald Reagan delivers an address called “A Time for Choosing,” marking his entry into national politics. “Freedom has never been so fragile,” he says, “so close to slipping from our grasp.” The speech propels Reagan into the governorship of California in 1966.

DECEMBER 18, 1964

The board of the American Conservative Union meets for the first time and launches the most successful conservative lobbying organization of the next generation. In 1973, it holds the first Conservative Political Action Conference, an annual gathering that has become a cattle call for Republican politicians with national ambitions.

Yet, as often noted, black Americans are in fact deeply socially “understood” racism, but whether his policies were, comparatively, better for black people than the other person’s. That such a rationale seems backward today reveals the extent to which Antiracism distracts us from what actual politics is supposed to be. For example, social conservatism (which I myself do not adhere to) is not the only thing black people and Republicans tend to have in common; pro-black political programs are hardly as unusual among Republicans as typically thought. George W. Bush, for example, opened his presidency proposing No Child Left Behind as a way to address the racial gap in school performance and faith-based initiatives as a way to help poor black communities help themselves. Yet after mentioning the Bush administration’s pro-black policies in print around 2003, I received a tart note from the editor of a prominent black publication asking what policies I could possibly be referring to.

Moreover, the radical strain of black political ideology has little purchase among ordinary black people. Few have any interest in the fantasy of reparations for slavery. Most black people, if presented with the proposition that we need something as unprecedented in human history as the absence of racism (social or institutional) to solve our problems, would recoil.

The reason black America nevertheless votes Democratic almost to a man is, in its way, religious. As I have argued, one sign that America has made more progress on race than certain pessimists insist is that the nation’s true religion is now Anti-racism. In whites, it manifests itself as treating the Manichaean and, therefore, much of black America. However, any such fear of a book such as Ta-Nehisi Coates’s latest as scripture; urging ritualistic atonement for original sin in the form of “acknowledging” one’s White Privilege; discouraging the blasphemy of serious questions (such as why one white cop’s killing a black man is a more urgent problem than black men’s welfare policies in 1996 was not an exception: It was an obscure killing one another by the hundreds); and yearning always for a matter to most people other than policy wonks and social scientists, hazily defined Great Day, a Revelation (whoops, revolution), when whites “out there” truly understand black pain and walk in grace.

Among black Americans, the religion manifests in the guiding idea that racism is the most urgent and interesting thing about being black. This sense is most vivid among the intelligentsia and the politically radical. But it has become part of the general black-American way of thinking to such an extent that one is not to vote for a Republican, regardless of his beliefs and platform, simply because “Republicans are racist.”

As progressive as it may seem today to treat racism as a decisive issue in allotting one’s vote, it would have seemed self-defeating to black people 50 or 100 years ago. W. E. B. Du Bois supported Woodrow Wilson despite knowing that Wilson was a racist whose ideal world would be “inhabited by flaxen-haired wax dolls.” Martin Luther King Jr. and his allies had no interest in whether John F. Kennedy felt for black people’s plight “in his heart,” as the Black Lives Matter questioner put it to Hillary Clinton in August. The idea was not whether a candidate

Only the religion of Antiracism could have blinded him to something at the time so obvious. One might suppose black people fear that Republicans will eliminate the safety net that the Roosevelt and Johnson administrations provided for the poor and, therefore, much of black America. However, any such fear is now a habitual gesture rather than a response to an actual stimulus. Progress happens slowly, but it happens; a party that sought to re-create the heartless social-welfare policies of America before the 1930s would rapidly cease to exist. The revision of black voting patterns. Today, a claim that Republican policies are not racist is readily shouted down via reference to the notorious voter-ID laws that Republicans have backed. In seeking to reduce Democratic voting tallies by making it harder for their most dependable allies to cast a vote, these voter-ID policies are brutally pragmatic more than racist. The pragmatism is, to be sure, callously dismissive of a black person’s basic right to vote, especially since, not long ago, many black people were barred from voting on the pain of their bodies and even lives. Nevertheless, there is a massive difference between forbidding people to vote and indirectly discouraging them from doing so. Claims that voter-ID laws take us back to Selma are performance art.

At this point, however, Republicans bear a heavy responsibility for perpetuating the disconnect between black beliefs and black voting patterns. Today, a claim that Republican policies are not racist is readily shouted down via reference to the notorious voter-ID laws that Republicans have backed. In seeking to reduce Democratic voting tallies by making it harder for their most dependable allies to cast a vote, these voter-ID policies are brutally pragmatic more than racist. The pragmatism is, to be sure, callously dismissive of a black person’s basic right to vote, especially since, not long ago, many black people were barred from voting on the pain of their bodies and even lives. Nevertheless, there is a massive difference between forbidding people to vote and indirectly discouraging them from doing so. Claims that voter-ID laws take us back to Selma are performance art. Yet the distinction here is fine, and few black people or other Democrats will be inclined to acknowledge it in a culture that

OCTOBER 25, 1965



Irving Kristol and Daniel Bell release the first issue of *The Public Interest*, a domestic-affairs quarterly in which neoconservatives—liberals “mugged by reality,” in Kristol’s definition—express dissatisfaction with Great Society liberalism. It publishes continuously for four decades, until 2005.

NOVEMBER 2, 1965

Buckley loses his race for mayor of New York City. Asked what he will do if he prevails, he quips: “Demand a recount.” His campaign reinvigorates conservatives demoralized by Goldwater’s defeat a year earlier and helps establish him as a public intellectual.

APRIL 30, 1966



Buckley’s public-affairs program *Firing Line* makes its debut, going on to become the longest-running television show of its type when it ends in 1999. It showcases Buckley’s skills as a debater and introduces conservative ideas to a mass audience.



fetishizes the exposure and denunciation of racism. Voter-ID laws are resolutely interpreted as “racist,” and they have set the relationship between black voters and the Republican party back for at least a generation. In the religion of Antiracism, the equivalent of the ongoing menace of Satan is the notion of an ever-looming “backlash” against the gains of the 1960s, led by Republicans and desired by the unenlightened whites, always “out there,” who didn’t vote for Obama. Nothing has ever been more readily interpretable as that vision come to life than voter-ID laws.

Of course, some Republicans, pragmatic again, might object that none of this matters because blacks could never have been swayed to vote for them anyway. But that is an untested proposition. Republicans have been much too indirect in demonstrating the benefits of their policies to black voters. Antiracism is not the only reason that editor couldn’t see the Bush administration’s pro-black programs. The administration had failed to spell out the implications of those programs for black America in a direct and ongoing way. One speech to that effect by the president could have done wonders; it never happened.

The problem continues today. Paul Ryan’s plan for fighting poverty could easily pass for an NAACP policy paper. Black America will never know a thing about it, however, if Ryan continues to refer only *poverty* and not *torace*. Why not a clear statement that the plan, in being aimed at poverty, will benefit black America directly, along with editorials stating this in black publications? Meanwhile, the Antiracism religion handily paints Ryan’s plan as paternalistic, pathologizing, and—of course—racist.

For the time being, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the caricature of the black conservative as a sinister unicorn has a lot of life left in it. There was a time when black persons with unquestionable black-authenticity bona fides, such as author Zora Neale Hurston, were fans of Booker T. Washington—advocate of self-help—rather than of Du Bois, who focused on decrying racism. Today, a rallying book such as Tavis Smiley’s *The Covenant with Black America* incants at the end of each chapter that black people must hold politicians “responsible” for following through on promises to the black community. Buleviathans with annual budgets in the hundreds of millions of dollars. They stir up a media frenzy about present or future at all seen as a way of handing the contest to them, the ideahorn (population, pesticides, famine, acid rain, sperm counts, the ozone layer, and so on); get their most articulate spokespeople on television, preferably with a celebrity or a

The voter-ID laws, combined with the forces of America’s religion, will keep black America in this holding pattern for some time. But it is to be hoped that someday black America will back to expressing its diversity—i.e., itself—in its politi



MATT RIDLEY

## Climate Coercion

PREDICTING catastrophe is a lucrative business. By doing so, the big environmental groups, such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, the World Wildlife Fund, and the Sierra Club, have grown into behemoths with annual budgets in the hundreds of millions of dollars. They stir up a media frenzy about present or future catastrophes (population, pesticides, famine, acid rain, sperm counts, the ozone layer, and so on); get their most articulate spokespeople on television, preferably with a celebrity or a

Mr. Ridley, the author of *The Evolution of Everything*, has written about climate change and other scientific topics for more than 25 years.



Text

ROMAN GENN

NOVEMBER 28, 1972

Robert Bartley becomes editorial-page editor of the *Wall Street Journal*. He extends the influence of his predecessor, Vermont Royster, and makes his editorial page a bullhorn of conservative opinion, especially on economic policy.

FEBRUARY 16, 1973

The Heritage Foundation opens its doors. Under the leadership of Edwin J. Feulner, who becomes its president in 1977, it grows into one of the conservative movement’s most important think tanks.

The  Heritage Foundation

DECEMBER 28, 1973



A Paris publisher issues, in Russian, *The Gulag Archipelago*, by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. The book highlights the atrocities of the Soviet Union against its people and delivers a devastating blow to its moral and political legitimacy.

JANUARY 1, 1974

George F. Will publishes his first syndicated column and goes on to become one of the most influential voices of his generation, both as a writer and as a fixture on televised political talk shows.

gimmick involving rappelling; and sit back and watch the dollars roll in.

What is different about the present climate scare is twofold. First, the mainstream scientific community joined in. Scientists had been the enemy in some previous scares, for example finding themselves mostly at odds with environmentalists over genetically modified organisms. But this time, academics were part of the funding gold rush—and not just climate scientists, but almost every type of academic. Biologists found that grants came their way if they said they were studying butterflies or turtles with a view to understanding the impact of climate change. Sociologists found that they could trouser big sums just for studying why people didn't "believe" in climate change. You can now get degrees in "climate communication"—whatever that is. And so on. Climate science, once a quiet backwater, exploded into a huge scientific endeavor, reaching something

in the comparatively distant future, predictions of it are largely immune to debunking. The failure of the climate over the past three decades to warm anywhere nearly as fast as predicted has mattered little. Activists just reached for some excuse to explain away the dearth of warming and then asserted that the future would be even worse than we had thought.

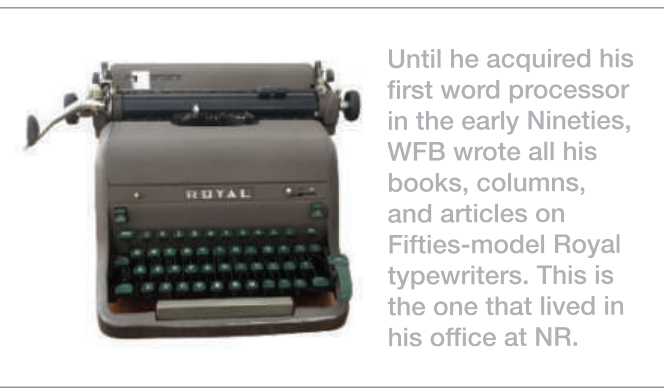
That's a scientific sin. Making predictions that fail, and then making excuses for failure, is what distinguishes pseudoscience from science. But it's now routine in climate science. The best example of it is the reaction to the "pause" or "hiatus" in warming that even mainstream scientists agree has occurred roughly since 1997.

This pause was not predicted. In fact, several prominent climate scientists have stated that a pause of more than 15 years would undermine the claim that anthropogenic climate change poses a danger. Here's what one of them, Phil Jones, head of the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia, wrote in 2009, when the pause was only a decade old: "Bottom line: the 'no upward trend' has to continue for a total of 15 years before we get worried" that climate projections are inaccurate. A statement from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration asserted in 2008 that its simulations "rule out (at the 95% level) zero trends for intervals of 15 yr or more." The pause is now around 18 years long.

Some observers are eager to declare that the pause has ended, since it's looking like 2015 will prove to be the warmest year yet, by a few tenths of a degree, in at least some of the surface-data sets (although not necessarily in the satellite data). But another way of putting this is that, in this era of supposedly rapid climate change, it has taken 18 years for the global average temperature to clearly break the record it set in 1998. Whether this represents the start of a surge in temperatures or a resumption of the gradual warming of the 1990s remains to be seen.

More than 20 "explanations" of the pause have now been published in the scientific literature, many of them little more than hand-waving guesses. But the explanation that makes the most sense—that climate models have overestimated the sensitivity of the climate to carbon dioxide and underestimated natural influences on climate, implying both that the warming of the 1990s was partly natural and that the warming of the 21st century will be less than expected—is strongly resisted.

There is nothing unusual about scientists' pushing their pet theory, seeking evidence that supports it, and ignoring evidence that does not. This is a normal human tendency known as "confirmation bias." It is a myth that scientists challenge their own theories. But they do challenge one another's, and that's what keeps science honest.



Until he acquired his first word processor in the early Nineties, WFB wrote all his books, columns, and articles on Fifties-model Royal typewriters. This is the one that lived in his office at NR.

like \$2 billion per year in federal funding today. And it has turned into a scientific cuckoo's nest in which other disciplines are elbowed aside and best practices are disregarded.

The line between environmentalist and scientist has become blurred. Several prominent climate scientists moonlight doing paid work for Greenpeace or the World Wildlife Fund. In one case that recently came to light, a climatologist named Jagadish Shukla, on a six-figure salary from George Mason University, spent his spare time as president of his own global-climate-change institute, which was so massively endowed with federal funds that he was able to draw down as salary over \$1.5 million in three years for himself, his wife, and his daughter. This came to light only after he had had the cheek to sign a letter demanding that those who contested the dangers of climate change be prosecuted under organized-crime laws.

The second difference between the climate scare and previous environmental panics is that, because this catastrophe is always

**JANUARY 22, 1974**  
Nellie Gray leads the first March for Life in Washington, D.C., one year after the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision. The march becomes an annual event, attracting hundreds of thousands of participants—if not much attention from mainstream media.

**OCTOBER 9, 1974**



tyranny. He resisted the label "conservative," preferring "classical liberal."

Friedrich Hayek wins the Nobel Prize in Economics. A native of Vienna and a father of "Austrian economics," Hayek came to renown in the United States for his 1944 book, *The Road to Serfdom*, which warned that central planning can lead to tyranny. He resisted the label "conservative," preferring "classical liberal."

**JANUARY 30, 1976**

In *Buckley v. Valeo*, the Supreme Court strikes down limits on campaign spending on First Amendment grounds. The plaintiff is Senator James Buckley, a New York Republican and the big brother of NATIONAL REVIEW's founder. In 2010, the Supreme Court extends the ruling in *Citizens United*.

**MARCH 23, 1976**

Following several defeats, Reagan wins North Carolina's Republican presidential primary, keeping alive his hope of capturing the GOP nomination from incumbent Gerald Ford. He fails in this immediate goal, but the win sets him up for success four years later.



And that is where certain climate scientists pulled off a trick. There's Stephan Lewandowsky, who, while at the University of Western Australia, tried to link climate skepticism to the belief that the moon landing was a hoax, when his own data showed that only ten respondents out of 1,145 thought that the moon landing was a hoax and seven of those did not think climate change was a hoax.

There's Rajendra Pachauri, chairman of the IPCC itself until he resigned after being accused of sexual harassment, who dismissed as "voodoo science" a report by India's leading glaciologist, V. K. Raina, about Himalayan glaciers because it criticized a highly implausible claim that they would vanish by the year 2035. This claim originally came from Syed Hasnain, who had taken a job with the Energy and Resources Institute, of which Pachauri is the director general, and whose presence there was essential to the institute's winning a share of a €3 million grant from the European Union.

There's the famous "hockey stick" graph, which purported to demonstrate that 20th-century temperatures were unprecedented but was later shown to rely heavily on just a few misleading tree-ring-data sets and on a statistical filter that exaggerated recent changes.

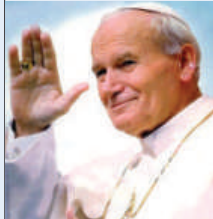
Speaking of Obama, he is keen on criticizing those who think the climate-change threat is exaggerated, often calling them "deniers." Yet he recently told the audience at a town-hall meeting in Des Moines that his own experience of universities was of China; the "upside down" Scandinavian lake core, a case in which the scientists who had collected the data interpreted a change in siltation rates as a cooling, but others turned the graph the other way up and claimed a warming; the Antarctic-warming record that can be explained entirely by a move of the station at which temperatures were taken; the graph that relied on just one larch tree in the Yamal Peninsula in Siberia; the Southern Hemisphere hockey-stick graph that omitted an inconvenient data series; the infamous "hide the decline" episode, in which a graph was truncated because tree-ring data showed an inconvenient 20th-century temperature decline for a time when the temperature was thought to have been rising.

And then there's Climategate, the scandal in which leaked e-mails revealed that senior climate scientists had repeatedly bullied and ostracized colleagues who had not toed the line.

With few exceptions, the media have chosen to ignore all of these stories or portray the people who uncovered them as the true villains.

Of course, most climate scientists are honest and principled. But the apparent lack of interest at top science academies in doing something about the bad apples is disturbing. It has certainly shaken my faith in science as an institution.

NR

APRIL 28, 1976	The John M. Olin Foundation approves its first major round of grants to conservative academic groups, think tanks, and public-interest law firms. Over the next decades, it builds what longtime president William E. Simon calls a "counterintelligence" of thinkers and activists.	JANUARY 1, 1977	The Cato Institute opens in San Francisco and five years later moves to Washington, D.C., where it establishes itself as the country's premier libertarian think tank, making common cause with conservatives on a range of budgetary, regulatory, and economic matters.	JUNE 6, 1978	Frustrated by sharp rises in property taxes, California voters approve Proposition 13. It limits taxes and marks the start of a nationwide "tax revolt."	OCTOBER 16, 1978	 The papacy of John Paul II begins. He upholds traditional Catholic teachings, rejects the moral relativism of the age, and works to undermine Communism in his native Poland and throughout Eastern Europe. He dies in 2005 and is canonized in 2014.
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Text



CHARLES G. KOCH

# Freedom's Framework

**T**HE natural progress of things," wrote Thomas Jefferson, "is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground." Whatever our differences, William F. Buckley Jr. and I often found ourselves in the same trenches as we fought for a free society against a grasping government. Also like him, I have a "considerable—and considered—optimism" that freedom can overcome the collectivism that has taken hold in the classroom, civil society, and halls of American government.

in which voluntary cooperation and competition are insufficient. Cooperation and competition are impossible without free speech and free markets undistorted by the subsidies or anti-competitive regulations that characterize cronyism and corporate welfare. They also require an environment that fosters learning through free speech and thought, which are crucial to challenging the status quo. It is the open flow of knowledge that leads to innovations that increase well-being throughout society.

*Mr. Koch is the chairman and CEO of Koch Industries Inc. His book Good Profit: How Creating Value for Others Built One of the World's Most Successful Companies was published in October.*

I have always been optimistic that freedom can prevail. That optimism is based on my conviction that the cause of freedom is just and can unite a majority of Americans. Previous freedom movements—the American Revolution, the abolition of slavery, the women's-suffrage movement, the civil-rights movement—all succeeded because they struck a moral chord with the American people. They all sought to right an injustice. Those of us who pursue freedom today must be similarly motivated. We must right the injustices that are holding our country back—the injustices that are preventing so many Americans, especially the least fortunate, from pursuing and achieving their dreams.

To make this a reality, we must establish a vision of a free and flourishing society—something that guides and inspires not only those who are like-minded but the nation as a whole.

In a free society, people help themselves by helping others. Social and material progress is driven by innovation and creative destruction, which leads to new and exciting opportunities for everyone. Societies that best approximate these ideals have proven to be the most successful at achieving widespread well-being—especially for the least fortunate.

But vision alone cannot create a free society. We also need a strong culture of principled entrepreneurship grounded in the belief that people can find fulfillment by benefiting others. This requires a deep respect for the moral dignity of all individuals, no matter their station in life. Similarly, toleration is a hallmark of a free society. It enables not only the community but the interactions necessary for human progress.

Ultimately, a free society cannot exist without secure individual rights, including property rights and equal treatment for everyone under the law. These encourage the efforts, investments, and risk-taking that make free societies so innovative and productive. The role of government should be limited to those activities

Finally, a free society requires that all of its members have the right incentives. Social and material progress is possible only when people benefit themselves by benefiting others. Whether someone's motives are altruistic, self-interested, or a mixture of both, free societies encourage mutually beneficial behavior and

MARCH 22, 1979



Phyllis Schlafly rallies grassroots support to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment. The top political priority of feminists in the 1970s, the ERA aimed to abolish the use of sex as a factor in determining the legal rights of individuals.

MAY 4, 1979

Margaret Thatcher becomes prime minister of the United Kingdom. She focuses on privatization and deregulation at home and on confronting Communism abroad. The second-most important prime minister of the 20th century, after Winston Churchill, she serves until 1990.

JUNE 1, 1979

Jerry Falwell founds Moral Majority, mobilizing Christian voters and ushering Evangelicals into GOP politics, where they become a potent influence on the party in the 1980s and beyond.

NOVEMBER 1, 1979



Commentary publishes "Dictatorships and Double Standards," an essay by Jeane Kirkpatrick that proposes fundamental differences between autocratic and Communist regimes. The essay animates the foreign policy of the Reagan administration.



discourage attempts to gain at the expense of others by cheating or advocating self-serving laws and regulations.

These items taken together, I believe, constitute the framework for a free society. This framework must be applied holistically in order for society (especially the least fortunate) to benefit. The best incentives in the world can't offset a lack of vision, and so as a whole loses if the law treats one group differently from another. As we apply this framework, we must do a better job of understanding what matters most to people, then demonstrate how a free society offers the best opportunity for them to achieve their goals.

This approach will inevitably take us beyond the issues and causes on which conservatives have reached broad consensus. One such example is criminal-justice reform, which has gained wider traction in recent years because it addresses the essential issues of justice, fairness, and morality. It is also consistent with the foundational principles of a free society.

The modern criminal-justice system was created by the same force that afflicts the rest of America: overbearing government at every level of society. After decades of growth, the federal criminal code contains roughly 5,000 criminal laws and hundreds of thousands of regulations with criminal penalties. State criminal codes, which are multiplying every year, only compound the problem.

As a result, the United States is the world's biggest jailer—first in the world for total number imprisoned and first among industrialized nations in the rate of incarceration. We have only 5 percent of the world's population but 25 percent of the world's prisoners. As of 2013, America had roughly 2.2 million people in local, state, and federal prisons—500 percent more than we had 30 years ago. All told, this system costs taxpayers a staggering \$39 billion annually.

We must take steps to address this crisis. Doing so will save tax dollars while enhancing public safety. It will also promote human dignity. As Mr. Buckley so eloquently put it: “The amount of money and legal energy being given to prosecute hundreds of thousands of Americans who are caught with a few ounces of marijuana in their jeans simply makes no sense—the kindest way to put it. A sterner way to put it is that it is an outrage, an imposition on basic civil liberties and on the reasonable expenditure of social energy.”

No matter what issue we address, those of us who fight for liberty simply cannot understand how it happened that a Republican administration must renew and increase our commitment to the cause.

Founding Fathers, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, Martin Luther King Jr., and the thousands of others who led successful movements were willing to dedicate their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. Their struggles and sacrifices united people in the vision of a better tomorrow. Theirs is the example we must follow if we hope to advance the cause of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for future generations of Americans.

And then those of us on the right chuckle meanly about the liberal-progressive-urban-media enclave. We tut-tut the elitist disavow they all have for someplace called “real America.” We mock ourselves with the sputtering ratings of left-leaning CNN, the black hole of viewership that is MSNBC, the soaring profits of



ROB LONG

# The Twitter Trap

STOP me if you've heard this story: A die-hard progressive living in a liberal enclave (usually when this story is told, it's about the *New Yorker* film critic Pauline Kael on the Upper West Side of Manhattan)

cannot understand how it happened that a Republican won the presidential election.

“How could he win?” goes the story. “Nobody I know voted for him!”

And then those of us on the right chuckle meanly about the liberal-progressive-urban-media enclave. We tut-tut the elitist disavow they all have for someplace called “real America.” We mock ourselves with the sputtering ratings of left-leaning CNN, the black hole of viewership that is MSNBC, the soaring profits of

TIM ROBERTS/GETTY IMAGES

JANUARY 11, 1980

The ten-part documentary *Free to Choose* begins to appear on PBS stations. Its host, the free-market economist Milton Friedman, evangelizes for capitalism and becomes a household name.

NOVEMBER 4, 1980



Ronald Reagan wins the presidency in what may be the most important political moment in the history of modern American conservatism. He defeats Jimmy Carter, the Democratic incumbent, and carries 44 states. His re-election in 1984 is even more sweeping.

AUGUST 13, 1981

Reagan signs the Kemp-Roth tax bill, cutting marginal tax rates and paving the way for the economic prosperity of the 1980s. Its Republican sponsors, Representative Jack Kemp of New York and Senator William V. Roth Jr. of Delaware, guide the bill through Congress despite a large Democratic majority in the House.

MARCH 1, 1982

*The Atlantic* publishes “Broken Windows,” an article on crime control by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling. It helps lay the groundwork for a significant drop in crime that begins in the early 1990s and continues still.

Fox News. We tell ourselves that all it really takes for conserva- and Medicare Part D and refundable tax credits—and the literal tives to win back the country is *communicate effectively* or sense, the sweet white stuff that gets a lot of federal attention. *utilize better messaging* or *leverage social-media platforms* or We had to talk a certain way, master a complicated code, to some other faddish nonsense. All we need, we tell ourselves, is to get heard and reported by the suspicious progressives who connect with the millions of people who already agree with us. ran (and still run, though no one is paying attention) the

Which now, of course, we can do easily. Conservative activists nation's newsrooms. and pundits—and even those who, for some personality-distorting Now we don't. And we think we're winning. And that's a reason, merely aspire to be in those categories—can tweet or problem.

post on Facebook or podcast directly to their audiences. As each “We can't lose!” a conservative activist told me when I told little insight into the day's events (what media types call a “hothim that I thought we were going to lose the next election. “I take”) trails through the sky like a comet, it collects “likes” and mean, I've got, like, *fiftythousand* Twitter followers!” “retweets” and “shares” and “follows,” and the result is that He didn't mean that his puny 50k was going to turn the tide in there are lots of people out there with an astonishing number of Ohio and sweep the Republican nominee to victory. He was online followers—hundreds of thousands of people listening to describing the network effect of a lot of individuals with a lot of the not-very-much-new that they have to say. followers multiplied many times over. What if, he was saying,

All of those crisscrossing and overlapping networks mean that we can get our message out in short and clever little “bites” of conservatives no longer have to hope that there's someone in the text and get it spread across the country before the newsroom newsroom—probably someone terrified and cowed—willing to Stalins even know what happened? What if in response to each represent a wisp of a trace of a shadow of a slightly conservatively outrage and distortion the Left tosses out, we can type a viewpoint. We don't have to hope for equal time. We've created pithy “Gotcha!” tweet and *get it out there*

it ourselves, not just in the one-size-fits-all Fox News network— He was describing, when you get right down to it, cat videos. on which every warm wind is *Stormwatch!* and every overseas And also: Donald Trump. (The two are closely related.) gunshot is *ISIS Is Coming to Murder Your Children*, but in the Twitter followings of NATIONAL REVIEW writers that intersect with unknown clever bloggers and witty conservatives across (Neither does Trump.) What our side forgets is that persuading the country. Twitter and Facebook positively hum and ripple people is hard and difficult and often requires a dollop of forget-fulness in the details (“*We absolutely* can grow our way out of this debt! No tax shenanigans necessary!”) and a splash of com- promise (“Of *course* everyone in America should have health insurance!”) on the way to real action. And real action is different

And this, we're told, is progress.

I'm not so sure.

For years, the secret weapon of the conservative movement from tweeting a lot or slamming some progressive right in his has been that we've known, deep down, that most Americans @replies, and here's a handy way to tell the difference: You can- don't agree with us. Oh, yes, they love the flag-waving stuff and not change the country or renew its free-market zeal or reform its the punchy bromides, but when it comes to cutting government crony-industrial sector or smash the public-school monopoly programs or slicing entitlements or running a flintier and stingier while you're sitting on the toilet, tweeting. And recent surveys welfare state, Americans tend to opt for the softer, more progres- confirm that it's right there, in that least social of all spaces, that sive option. Conservatives have accepted this, somewhere in many Americans do the majority of their online socializing. their dark hearts, for the past 50 years and have become, essen- Conservatives—back when we were losers and outcasts and tially, bilingual. We've developed the ability to talk to liberals uptight scolds—knew that the road to liberty and a better America and progressives in their own idiom. We didn't have millions of was a slow, hard trudge, often backward, and the road to serfdom followers somewhere to retweet our tweets and “like” our tax was a fun little glide down the waterslide of entitlement spending plans. We had to do the hard work of getting in a van—probably and women's-studies classes. But lately, we've become a little bit somewhere cold and wet and hard to reach from LaGuardia or more like the out-of-touch progressive in that hilarious story. In a Reagan National—and going out to meet Americans who—let's bubble of “likes” and “follows,” we're convinced that we're win- face it—like them a little bit of federally supplied sugar. And Ining, that we're loved, that America is right behind us. mean “sugar” in both the metaphorical sense—ethanol subsidies Just like . . . well, you get the picture.

NR

APRIL 23, 1982

Conservative law students at Yale University begin the Federalist Society. The group organizes students, lawyers, and judges, transforming the politics of the judiciary and serving as a counterweight to an increasingly left-wing American Bar Association.



MARCH 8, 1983

Giving a speech in Florida, Reagan describes the Soviet Union as an “evil empire.” Two weeks later, he announces the Strategic Defense Initiative, a missile-defense proposal that becomes a defining feature of conservative national-security strategy.

OCTOBER 25, 1983

The United States invades Grenada, responding to a left-wing coup. Coming amid Reagan's defense build-up, the military action demonstrates the United States' ability and willingness to project power and ends American policymakers' aversion to confrontation abroad.

SEPTEMBER 27, 1984



Basic Books publishes Charles Murray's *Losing Ground*, a data-driven indictment of the welfare state, launching a welfare-reform movement that will enjoy success on the federal level a dozen years later.





RUSH LIMBAUGH

# A Conservative-Media Revolution

**W**HEN I arrived in New York City 28 years ago, I began my national radio program, my objective was to have the most-listened-to show in the country. At that time, the national broadcast media included three television networks and CNN. That was it. There were 125 radio stations doing talk radio, and I was on 56 of them. No one had ever succeeded in syndicating a national daytime radio show, and I was predicted to fail, But I didn't. What was different about my show was it—just as *NATIONAL REVIEW* was the only major conservative magazine being published and read.

I traveled 45 weekends each year for the first two years of my show to solidify my radio-affiliate relationships. Think Donald Trump's stump appearances, 45 weekends a year in cities all across America. Crowds ranged from 2,500 to 10,000 or more. I made fun of liberals, espoused and explained conservatism, and promoted traditional American values. And audiences ate it up; they had been starved for it.

In 1991, my substitute hosts were offered their own national shows as other syndicators got in on the action. Local-radio stations all over the country switched format to talk and hired conservative hosts.

Today, there are more than 2,500 stations doing talk radio, the vast majority of which lean conservative. There is Fox News, which debuted in 1997. There is the conservative blogosphere, and there are more conservative websites than you can count. In 1992, I began hosting a national TV show and continued to do so for the next four years *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, except that I was conservative and did not interview guests. There was nothing like it on TV, just as there was nothing like my radio show.

So this has not been an AM-radio revolution exclusively; it has been a conservative-media revolution. And perhaps its greatest consequence has been the destruction of the Left's national-media monopoly.

Here are a few highlights:

In 1990, one of my dreams came true. William F. Buckley Jr. invited me to his home to attend an editors' dinner, befriended me, and remained my friend until his death. I loved WFB, and his friendship and support sustain me to this day.

In 1993, while aboard Air Force One, President Clinton called my St. Louis affiliate, KMOX, to complain that I had attacked the FBI's raid of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas. "Rush only defended her because she was being attacked by a black guy," Clinton said. The room reacted with stunned silence. I have not bothered to attend the dinner since.

In 1994, Republicans won the House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years. I was made an honorary member of the GOP freshman class and was asked to speak at its orientation. I warned them that the media were not happy, would not treat them as victors, and would do their best to secure Republican defeat in 1996.

*Mr. Limbaugh hosts the most-listened-to radio talk show in America, airing on more than 600 stations.*

**NOVEMBER 5, 1985**


Michael Joyce becomes president of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, which underwrites much of the academic work and activism behind welfare reform and school choice. By the early 21st century, it is the most important financial backer of conservative public policy.

**SEPTEMBER 17, 1986**

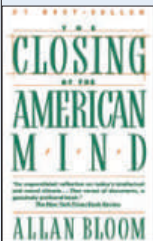
The Senate confirms Antonin Scalia to the Supreme Court. Over the next three decades, he becomes the country's most forceful voice for judicial originalism, famous for his intellectual rigor, cogent majority opinions, and blistering dissents.

**DECEMBER 4, 1986**

The struggling American Enterprise Institute appoints Christopher C. DeMuth as its president. He turns it into one of the most important sources of intellectual ammunition for the Right.



**JUNE 7, 1987**



*The Closing of the American Mind*, by Allan Bloom, becomes a surprise best-seller. A book-length version of an essay Bloom wrote for *NATIONAL REVIEW*, it warns of declining intellectual standards and neglect of the Western canon at American universities.

In 1995, Clinton, in a national address, tried to blame the Oklahoma City bombing. He spoke of “loud, angry in America,” a remark that was widely interpreted as a r to me. The White House later made the incredible clai Clinton had been talking about Michigan Militia shortwa radio communications.

In 2007, Senate majority leader Harry Reid asked the syndicator, Clear Channel, make me apologize for calling phony soldier a phony soldier. Mark May, the CEO of Channel, bravely let me have Reid’s letter, and I auctioned eBay as proof of a United States senator’s attempt to private citizen for exercising his freedom of speech. I pro to match the purchase price of the letter and donate the the Marine Corps Law Enforcement Fund. The price ended being an unbelievable \$2.1 million dollars, so the total tion was \$4.2 million. Thank you, Dingy Harry.

On January 16, 2009, *WashStreet Journal* asked me to write 400 words on my hopes for the Obama presidency them I needed only four: “I hope he fails.” A firestorm even among my friends. I stood by my words, proudly. bad they didn’t come true.

In 2009, at his first meeting at the White House with sional leaders, President Obama told House speaker Jo Boehner and the Republican congressional leadership th should “stop listening to Rush Limbaugh,” since “th how things get done in Washington.” I met with Boehner in my office in Florida a couple of weeks later. He confirmed the president’s statement and remarked, “We have no idea why he said that to us.” I said to him, “John, he wanted just one of you to leave that meeting, go to the microphones, and denounce me.”

And there is much more. Its consequences are unmistakable. I firmly believe that the conservative-media revolution has caused the liberal media to abandon any pretense of objectivity and fairness and actively advocate on the Left’s behalf. This has led in turn to the hyper-partisan nature of our politics to When Republicans were perennial losers and happy about it, the media could stay hidden behind their wall of phony objectivity. But they were called out. Now there is a fierce competition for the hearts and minds of the American people, which the Left used to believe it owned.

So it is not I, nor anyone else in conservatism, who blame for the partisanship in Washington. That is on the Democrats and the Left, for trying to destroy the traditions and institutions that have defined this country. We stand in exactly what I meant. this great nation, and we always will. And we look forward to the Republican party’s someday joining us. **NR** certainly knew the type. It was the “perpetual-motion pie



JAY NORDLINGER

# Contemporary Classical: A Listening

Some years ago, I was covering a concert at Carnegie Hall, whose program included a new work. A while after the premiere. When it had ended, I leaned over to a critic across the aisle from me and said, “I’m so sorry about this piece.” He threw back his head and laughed. He said, “I’ve never heard this specific piece, of course—but I certainly knew the type. It was the “perpetual-motion pie

JUNE 12, 1987

At a speech before the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, Reagan tells the leader of the Soviet Union: “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.”

AUGUST 4, 1987

The Federal Communications Commission repeals the Fairness Doctrine, which required broadcasters to provide “balanced” approaches to controversial topics. Its elimination opens the way for conservatives to dominate talk radio. One year later, Rush Limbaugh enters syndication.

OCTOBER 23, 1987

The Senate votes down Robert Bork’s nomination to the Supreme Court, giving birth to a new era of politicized confirmation hearings. In his place, Reagan nominates Anthony Kennedy, who becomes the swing vote in the most contentious court cases of the next three decades.

NOVEMBER 9, 1989



After partitioning Berlin for nearly four decades—and serving as the world’s most powerful metaphor for the divisions between Western freedom and Communist tyranny—the Berlin Wall finally comes down. Germany soon reunifies under democratic government.



as I sometimes call it, or the “frenetic piece.” Busy busy busy. There is a lot of intellectualism in music today, and less inspiration. Brainy people choose to compose. They could be doctors, lawyers—even scientists—but they choose to compose. Which is too bad: They’re brainier than they are musical. I don’t know what Bruckner would have scored on his SAT. I do know he was a genius.

There’s the sci-fi piece, with glubs and glurps and other such sounds. Relatedly, you have the spooky-jungle piece, with hoots and growls and so on. Then there’s the end-of-the-world piece—very popular. The post-apocalypse piece, the “bleakscapes,” as I have termed it. You also have the cinematic, Disneyesque piece, filled with swells and tinkles.

All of these pieces tend to be loaded with percussion. Music historians of the future might label our age “The Age of Percussion.” I often say, “Today’s music has more pots and pans pretend to see, fine robes.”

A herd mentality exists in classical music, as in other fields. Composers are loath to stray too far from their fellows. People say that all Vivaldi concertos sound alike. That’s not true, but a composer). Immediately, he said, “Penderecki.” Then he said, if it were, they’d have the excuse of having been written by “Um . . . well . . .” He paused for a long time, smiling at me. He was saying, in effect, *Pickin’s are slim, aren’t they?* Later, he spoke up for Rodion Shchedrin and Aaron Jay Kernis—who are well worth speaking up for.

There are other types I could mention, including the environmental piece, the global-warming piece: I call them “greenpieces.”

Let me not be too dismissive or snotty: There is good music about. But we may be in something of a drought, greatness- or semi-standard, repertoire. I was able to tell him so, too, as he wise. Who was the last great composer? Shostakovich, who died in 1975? You will also get votes for Britten (d. 1976), Bernstein (d. 1990), and others.

“You can never tell who’s great or durable in your own age!” people exclaim, sometimes anxiously or angrily. The answer is: Sometimes you can, sometimes you can’t.

Arvo Pärt is a figure to be reckoned with, the genuine article. Someone once said to me, “Who’s a good composer today, and who should not be penalized for that.

don’t say Arvo Pärt!” I think my questioner meant that too many say Pärt. Well, I do too. Pärt is one of the holy minimalists, i.e., practitioners of compositional minimalism who are inspired by religion. The grandees of regular old minimalism are still around, chiefly Philip Glass and Steve Reich. A few years ago, Glass composed his Violin Concerto No. 2, subtitled “The American Four Seasons.” It is intelligent and ultimately very moving.

Say this for the minimalists, if nothing else: During the second half of the 20th century, they helped keep tonality alive, while it was under assault. The serialists ruled the roost. (Practitioners of musical serialism.) Ned Rorem labeled them the “serial killers.” Some of them were talented and commendable. But Pierre Boulez, Elliott Carter, Roger Sessions (all of them talented and commendable): Will anyone listen to their music in the future? I have my doubts.

But may more of it out, soon, please?

NR

APRIL 27, 1990

Republican governor Tommy Thompson of Wisconsin signs a school-choice law under which poor Milwaukee students can use publicly funded vouchers to pay for private schooling. It becomes a model for education reformers.

OCTOBER 15, 1991

After a bitter fight, the Senate confirms Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court, where he becomes a stalwart member of the originalist bloc.

DECEMBER 26, 1991



The Cold War ends and the Soviet Union ceases to exist, as Mikhail Gorbachev resigns from the presidency and hands over nuclear launch codes to Russian president Boris Yeltsin. Says President George H. W. Bush: “This is a victory for democracy and freedom.”

MAY 19, 1992

Vice President Dan Quayle delivers his “Murphy Brown” speech, criticizing the titular character of a popular television show for having a child out of wedlock. Democrats and Hollywood liberals respond with hysteria, and Quayle’s remarks become a seminal event in the culture wars.



DEIRDRE NANSEN McCLOSKEY



Text

# The Great Enrichment

**T**HE commercial bourgeoisie—the middle class of traders, inventors, and managers, the entrepreneur and the merchant, the inventor of carbon-fiber materials and the contractor remodeling your bathroom, the improver of automobiles in Toyota City and the supplier of spices in New Delhi—is, on the whole, contrary to the conviction of the “clerisy” of artists and intellectuals, pretty good. Further, modern world was made not by material causes, such as coal and thrift or capital or exports or exploitation or imperialism or good property rights or even good science, all of which have been widespread in other cultures and other times. It was made by ideas from and about the bourgeoisie—by an explosion after 1800 in technical ideas and a few institutional concepts, backed by a massive ideological shift toward market-tested betterment, on a large scale at first peculiar to northwestern Europe.

What made us rich are the ideas backing the system—usually but misleadingly called modern “capitalism”—in place since the year of European political revolutions, 1848. We should call the system “technological and institutional betterment at a frenetic pace, tested by unforced exchange among the parties involved.” Or “fantastically successful liberalism, in the old European sense, applied to trade and politics, as it was applied also to science and music and painting and literature.” The simplest version is “trade-tested progress.” Or maybe “innovationism”?

The greatly enriched world cannot be explained in any deep way by the accumulation of capital, despite what economists from the blessed Adam Smith through Karl Marx to Thomas Piketty have believed, and as the very word “capitalism” seems to imply. The word embodies a scientific mistake. Our riches did not come from piling brick on brick, or bachelor’s degree on bachelor’s degree, or bank balance on bank balance, but from piling idea on idea. The bricks, B.A.s, and bank balances—the “capital” accumulations—were of course necessary. But so were a labor force and liquid water and the arrow of time. Oxygen is necessary for a fire, but it does not provide an illuminating explanation of the Chicago Fire. Better: a long dry spell, the city’s wooden buildings, a strong wind from the southwest, and, if you disdain Irish immigrants, Mrs. O’Leary’s cow.

The modern world similarly cannot be explained by routine brick-piling, such as the Indian Ocean trade, English banking, canals, the British savings rate, the Atlantic slave trade, coal, natural resources, the enclosure movement, the exploitation of workers in Satanic mills, or the accumulation in European cities of capital, whether physical or human. Such materialist ways of means are too common in world history and, as explanation, too feeble in quantitative oomph.

The upshot of the new ideas has been a gigantic improvement since 1848 for the poor, such as many of your ancestors and mine, and a promise, now being fulfilled in China and India, of the same result worldwide. It is a Great Enrichment for the poorest among us. Earlier prosperities had intermittently increased real income per head by double or even triple, 100 or 200 percent or so, only for it to fall back to the miserable \$3 a day typical of humans since the caves. But the Great Enrichment increased real income per head, in the face of a rise in the number of heads, by a factor of seven—by anything from 2,500 to 5,000 percent. The average American now earns \$130 each day; in the rest of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, citizens earn from

*Deirdre Nansen McCloskey until this year taught economics, history, English, and communication at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The third volume of her Bourgeois Era trilogy, Bourgeois Equality: How Ideas, Not Capital or Institutions, Enriched the World, will be published in April.*

SEPTEMBER 26, 1994

Conservatives defeat national health-insurance legislation, as Senate majority leader George J. Mitchell, a Democrat, announces that Congress will stop pursuing what has been the top policy goal of President Bill Clinton.

NOVEMBER 8, 1994



Republicans capture the House of Representatives for the first time since 1952. Led by Georgia congressman Newt Gingrich, who becomes speaker, they propose a “Contract with America” that offers balanced budgets, tax cuts, lawsuit reform, and a return to federalism.

JANUARY 23, 1996



“The era of big government is over,” announces President Clinton, who goes on to work with Republicans on welfare reform and fiscal-discipline measures. Starting in 1998, the federal government enjoys four years of surpluses.



\$80 to \$110. The magnitude of the improvement stuns. Economists ideas in the society at large about such people and their better- and historians have no satisfactory explanation for it. Time to ments—in a word, liberalism, in all but the modern American rethink our materialist explanations of economies and histories. sense. The market-tested betterment, the Great Enrichment, was

Contrary to many voices of the Left and Right, the Great itself caused by a Scottish Enlightenment version of equality, a Enrichment has also not come at the cost of spirit. True, shall itnew equality of legal rights and social dignity that made every profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his ownTom, Dick, and Harriet a potential innovator.

soul? But the riches in our present lives allow the sacred and These are controversial claims. They are, you see, optimistic. meaning-giving virtues of hope, faith, and transcendent love for For reasons I do not entirely understand, the clerisy after 1848 science or baseball or medicine or God to bulk larger than the pro-turned toward nationalism and socialism, and against liberalism. fane and practical virtues of prudence and temperance that are nec- It came to delight in ever-expanding, pessimistic catechisms essary among people living in extreme poverty. H. L. Mencken, no about the way we live now in our approximately liberal soci- softie, noted in 1917 à propos Jennie Gerhardt's and Sister Carrie's eties, whether the sin is a lack of temperance among the good fortune that, "with the rise from want to security, from fear toVictorian-era poor or an excess of carbon dioxide in the atmos- ease, comes an awakening of the finer perceptions, a widening of phere today. One could offset the pessimism, or so the leading the sympathies, a gradual unfolding of the delicate flower called lights imagined, by having faith in the anti-liberal utopias of the personality, an increased capacity for loving and living." day, which have proven immensely popular. Prohibition.

The bettering ideas arose in northwestern Europe from a novel Radical environmentalism. The clerisy's pessimistic and utopian liberty and dignity that was slowly extended to all commoners books have sold millions. (though admittedly we are still working on the project), among But the 20th-century experiments of nationalism and socialism, them the bourgeoisie. The new liberty and dignity resulted in a of syndicalism in factories and central planning for investment, startling revaluation by the society as a whole of the trading and of proliferating regulation for imagined but not factually docu- betterment in which the bourgeoisie specialized. The revaluation mented imperfections in the market, did not work. And most of was derived not from some ancient superiority of the Europeans the pessimistic scenarios about how we live now have proven to but from egalitarian accidents in their politics between Luther's be mistaken. Still they persist, in Senator Sanders and Mr. Trump, Reformation in 1517 and the American Constitution and the in Jeremy Corbyn in Britain and Marine Le Pen in France, and in French Revolution in 1789. The Leveller Richard Rumbold, fac- less sensational form in the low opinion that people across the ing his execution in 1685, declared, "I am sure there was no manpolitical spectrum hold about liberty and dignity.

born marked of God above another; for none comes into the world In the 18th century, certain members of the intellectual elite, with a saddle on his back, neither any booted and spurred to ridesuch as Voltaire and Thomas Paine, courageously advocated for him." Few in the crowd gathered to mock him would have agreed.liberties in trade and for the dignity that comes in the pursuit of A century later, many would have. By now, almost everyone. betterment. During the 1830s and 1840s, however, a much

Along with the new equality came another leveling idea, coun- enlarged clerisy, mostly the sons of bourgeois fathers, began tering the rule of aristocrat or central planner: a "Bourgeois Deal." sneering at the economic liberties and social dignities their In the first act, let a bourgeoisie try out in the marketplace herfathers were exercising so vigorously. The conservative side of proposed betterment, such as window screens or alternating- the clerisy, influenced by the Romantic movement, looked back current electricity or the little black dress. With a certain irritation, with nostalgia to an imagined Middle Ages free from the vulgarity she accepts as part of the deal the condition that in the second actof trade, a non-market golden age in which rents and stasis and some doubtless low-quality competitors will imitate her success, hierarchy prevailed. Such a vision of olden times fit well with the driving down the price of screens, electricity, and dresses. But if Right's perch in the ruling class, governing the mere residents. the society lets her in the first act have a go, enriching her for Later, under the influence of science, the Right seized upon social while, then, by the third act, the payoff from the deal is that sheDarwinism and eugenics to devalue the liberty and dignity of will make you all rich. That's what happened, 1848 to the present.ordinary people and to elevate the nation's mission above the

In other words, what mattered were two levels of ideas: the mere individual, recommending, for example, colonialism and ideas for the betterments themselves (the electric motor, the air- compulsory sterilization and the cleansing power of war. plane, the stock market), dreamed up in the heads of the new On the left, meanwhile, the radical intellectuals and elites—also entrepreneurs drawn from the ranks of ordinary people; and the influenced by Romanticism and then by their own scientific

OCTOBER 7, 1996



Fox News Channel goes on the air. It becomes the third provider of round-the-clock cable news, after CNN and MSNBC, and promises a "fair and balanced" approach. By 2002, it is America's most popular cable news channel.

NOVEMBER 5, 1996

California voters pass Proposition 209, banning racial preferences in public employment, contracting, and university admissions. The initiative inspires a handful of other states to follow suit.

NOVEMBER 7, 2000



George W. Bush, the Republican governor of Texas, wins the presidential election over Vice President Al Gore, a Democrat. The race is so close in the swing state of Florida that it takes the intervention of the Supreme Court on December 12 to confirm Bush's victory.

materialism—developed the illiberal idea that ideas do not matter. What matters to progress, the Left declared, is the unstoppable tide of history, aided (it declared further, contradicting the posed unstopability) by editorials or protests or strikes or revolutions directed at the ravenous bourgeoisie—such thrilling actions to be led, of course, by the intellectuals themselves. Later, in European socialism and American Progressivism, the Left proposed to defeat bourgeois monopolies in meat and steel by gathering under regulation or syndicalism or planning or collectivization all the monopolies, merging them into one supreme monopoly called the State. In 1965, the Italian Bruno Leoni (1913–1967) observed that “the creation of giant and generalized monopolies is [said by the Left to be] precisely a type of ‘remedy’ against so-called private ‘monopolies.’”

While all this deep thinking was roiling the clerisy of the commercial bourgeoisie—despised by the Right and the Left and by many in the middle, too, all of them thrilled to the romance of works such as *Main Kampf* and Lenin’s “What Is to Be Done?”—created the Great Enrichment and the modern world, proving that both social Darwinism and economic Marxism were mistaken. The genetically inferior races and classes and ethnicities and genders proved not to be so. They proved to be created. The exploited proletariat was not immiserated. It was enriched.

In its enthusiasm for the materialist but deeply erroneous pseudo-discoveries of the 19th century—nationalism, socialism, Benthamite utilitarianism, hopeless Malthusianism, Comtean positivism, neo-positivism, legal positivism, elitist Romanticism, inverted Hegelianism, Freudianism, phrenology, homophobia, historical materialism, hopeful Communism, leftist anarchism, communitarianism, social Darwinism, “scientific” racism, racial history, theorized imperialism, apartheid, eugenics, tests of statistical significance, geographic determinism, gender determinism, institutionalism, intelligence quotients, social engineering, slum clearance, Progressive regulation, cameralist civil service, the rule of experts, and a cynicism about the power of ethical ideas—the clerisy mislaid its earlier commitment to a free and dignified common people. It forgot the main, simple truth of one proven, social discovery of the 19th century: Ordinary men and women do not need to be nudged or planned from above, and when honored and left alone become immensely creative. “In practical terms, the American experiment could have failed in a hundred ways,” sang the democratic, American poet. He did.

The Great Enrichment, in short, came out of a novel, Anglo-American bourgeois, and anti-statist rhetoric that enriched the world. In the English-speaking nations, of course, Anglo-American liberalism, as Adam Smith said, “allowing every man [and woman, dealing] to pursue his own interest his own way, upon the liberal political equality, liberty, and justice.”



KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON

# The Future Is Free



Text

THE battle cry of this magazine notwithstanding, there is no capital-“H” Hegelian History, and nothing—certainly not political liberty—is inevitable. It was far from inevitable that a congress of farmers and lawyers meeting in Philadelphia in the late 18th century would adopt as its national creed the most radical interpretation of the already extraordinary and English conception of liberty, or that it would succeed in practical terms. The American experiment could have failed in a hundred ways.

And yet . . . it’s an awfully American-looking world out there. In the English-speaking nations, of course, Anglo-American liberalism thrives to such an extent that the leftwardmost credible political elements in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, etc., flatly socialist within recent memory and some-

SCOTT BARROW/CORBIS

SEPTEMBER 14, 2001



Standing in the rubble of the World Trade Center, President Bush speaks through a bullhorn. “I can’t hear you!” shouts a rescue worker. “I can hear you!” Bush replies. “The rest of the world hears you! And the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon!”

JUNE 12, 2007

President Bush dedicates the Victims of Communism Memorial in Washington, D.C. “To the more than one hundred million victims of communism and to those who love liberty,” reads an inscription on the statue’s pedestal.



JUNE 26, 2008



In *District of Columbia v. Heller*, a 5–4 majority of the Supreme Court rules that “the Second Amendment protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes.”



Korea, some political trends are moving in the wrong direction. That South Korean example is telling in an important way: When the governments of Park Geun-hye and Lee Myung-bak invoked a 1940s national-security law to harass their political opponents—going so far as to dissolve a left-wing party—the complaints, which came from across the political spectrum, weren't that this sort of action was illiberal, that it failed to live up to the example set in the West, but rather that the action was anachronistic. Thomas Jefferson's radicalism is just how the world is now.

The civilized world, anyway. Anglo-American liberalism may not have the Mandate of Heaven or History or Whatever, but it certainly has been blessed in its rivals: the revolutionary terror of Robespierre, Lenin, and Pol Pot; mass-murdering Fascism and mass-murdering Communism; the torpor and stagnation of caudillo autocracy; most recently, the worldwide atrocities of totalist Islam. For human beings who wish to live as human beings, Anglo-American liberalism, or some near variant of it, has been winning by default for more than a century now.

Contra George W. Bush's overly sunny assessment, the desire for freedom does not reside in every human heart; some human hearts are very deeply etched with a desire to take a machete to the Tutsi or to liquidate the kulaks. But if there is something that we hate more than the tribe down the road, it is being hungry, miserable, and vulnerable. The perennial error of the Left is its belief that the blessings of American life come from democracy, which is only a procedural necessity. The messy fact, never quite sorted out in our Protestant national soul, is that the material blessings of American life—the splendid vulgar excess of Donald Trump and recliners with built-in oversized cup-holders—come from the same source as the nobler blessings that have left us free and at peace to serve God as we judge best. In every generation, there are a few extraordinary souls who contemplate the

<p>Speaking from the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Rick Santelli of CNBC rails against the Obama administration's stimulus and bailout proposals. He calls for a new tea party, giving a name to an emerging movement that will soon influence conservative politics.</p>	<p>NOVEMBER 2, 2010</p>	<p>Republicans win control of the House of Representatives, providing a vital check on strident Democratic ambitions. President Obama calls the Democratic defeat "a shellacking."</p>	<p>JUNE 30, 2014</p>	<p>In <i>Burwell v. Hobby Lobby</i>, a case of the Supreme Court upholds the rights of religious organizations, allowing some companies to reject mandates that require them to offer contraceptive coverage to employees. In the case, a majority of the justices offer contrasting views on the basis for religious objections.</p>
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t Which is to say, the fact that the economics and the moral reasoning both are on the side of liberty is completely beside the point in the real world: Liberty seduces. Liberty feels good. And despite fitful efforts to separate the material benefits of the liberal order from political liberalism per se—most notably in China—people from all over the world have stumbled into an understanding that this is a package deal.

*Pl. v. Hobby*  
5–4 majority  
Supreme Court  
the principle  
is freedom,  
some compa-  
fect federal  
—in this  
mandate to  
reception  
rees—on  
of religious  
s.

NOVEMBER 4, 2014

Current Government is a Democrat  
Current Government is a Republican

Republicans sweep the midterm elections, gaining control of the Senate, increasing their majority in the House, and achieving their strongest position in state

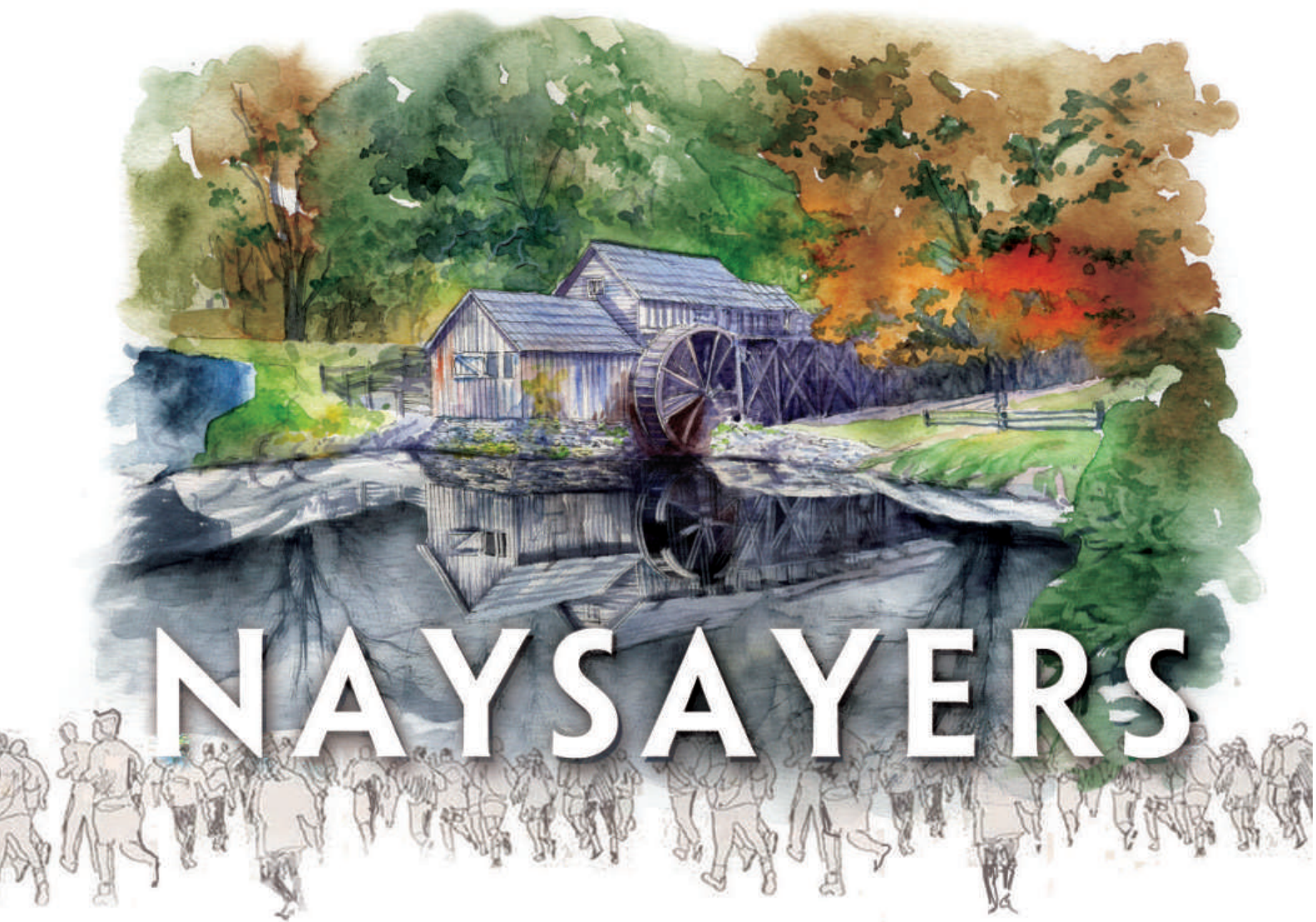
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Speaking from the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Rick Santelli of CNBC rails against the Obama administration's stimulus and bailout proposals. He calls for a new tea party, giving a name to an emerging movement that will soon influence conservative politics.

Republicans win control of the House of Representatives, providing a vital check on strident Democratic ambitions. President Obama calls the Democratic defeat “a shellacking.”

In *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, a 5–4 majority of the Supreme Court upholds the principle of religious freedom, allowing some companies to reject federal mandates—in this case, a mandate to offer contraception to employees—on the basis of religious objections.

Republicans sweep the midterm elections, gaining control of the Senate, increasing their majority in the House, and achieving their strongest position in state governments since the 1920s.



BY ORSON SCOTT CARD

ALVIN wasn't in much of a hurry, or he and Arthur Stuart would've jumped over Turkey Creek and continued on their way. But Alvin was using this trip to quiz young Arthur on his times tables. Or debating Cuvier's theory of catastrophism and how it stacked up to uniformitarianism. Or the poor crop of candidates for the upcoming presidential election.

So they was poking along about three miles away from Lake Erie, where the farms were fewer and the woods sometimes came right up to both sides of a creek. Even now, late in August, there was a brisk flow of water in Turkey Creek, and just as Alvin was thinking, This would make a pretty dependable mill race, they came out of the trees and right where it ought to be, there was a mill.

*In 1965, NATIONAL REVIEW published "Harrison Bergeron," Kurt Vonnegut's dystopian story about forced equality. Harking back to that milestone, this issue presents a new story by Orson Scott Card, the author of Ender's Game and many other books. Mr. Card's story continues his six-volume series The Tales of Alvin Maker, an epic fantasy of the American frontier.*

Except it wasn't, not anymore, because the wheel was gone. But everything else was right, including the diversion dam and the channel to carry the water with all its force over the non-existent wheel.

"Use to be a working mill," said Arthur Stuart. "Cause there's the pieces of the wheel."

It was a dirty piece of destruction, all the spokes and blades broken up and half burnt. "Looks like somebody didn't like this miller and made sure to put him out of business," said Arthur Stuart.

Alvin couldn't argue. But the sun was getting low, and they couldn't see a town nearby, and either somebody was living in that millhouse or they wasn't, but Alvin knew that if he told them he was a miller's son, there'd be a place for him and Arthur Stuart to spend the night.

There was a place, but there wasn't a soul to ask, so they accepted the roof and walls as if nature had made them, and ate a bit of the bread and cheese they'd earned by fixing a busted axle over on the downs near Walnut Creek at noontime.

Like usual, the hardest part about the job had been to get the wagon's owner to go away long enough that Alvin could fix the

ROMAN GENN AND LUBA MYTS



thing without the fellow seeing how he did it, since folks often got themselves in a lather about it if they got to think Alvin was doing it by hexery. You trying to put a curse on me and my trade?

Alvin could never get folks to understand that what he did wasn't magicking, it was just getting his doodlebug inside the axle and lining things up so they held together nice and tight and the hubs would turn on the axle nice and smooth. It wasn't a curse or even a prayer, it was just letting the iron and the wood know what was needed and helping them get it done. Seemed like the more Alvin tried to explain it, the more upset they got.

So nowadays, it was Arthur Stuart's job to pretend to twist his ankle or retch or start batting away imaginary wasps or something, and while their back was turned Alvin would stand there not moving a muscle while his doodlebug showed him how things was, and by the time they came back the job was done. "It wasn't as broke as you thought it was," said Alvin. "It was pretty easy to get it back in line, and I'm thinking it'll hold up at least long enough to get you home."

Truth was, when Alvin fixed something made of metal, it wasn't going to wear out or break again till long after the owner was dead. But that was certainly long enough to get the man home to his family, and Alvin figured it was all right to accept the man's offer of the food he had left over from his journey, seeing how he'd be home in Girard before nightfall.

In the morning they finished the bread and cheese and Alvin was all for going on their way, because he had an idea of getting up into the mountains so he could come down again in the Hio Valley and maybe call in at Hatrack River and see how Peggy was doing.

But instead Arthur Stuart starts laughing and Alvin says what's so funny, and Arthur Stuart says you know you can't go on until you find out what happened to this mill so let's just get started and not pretend to discuss whether or not to ask around.

That's why they walked on downstream and passed two more mills, both done the same way as the first one, and not a farmhouse standing anywhere near to Turkey Creek even though it was clean water and only a fool builds his house so he has to haul water any farther than he needs to.

Finally they came to a fine-looking brick building that was not and never had been a mill. In fact it had that look of substance that said it was meant to be either a bank or a school. But it was neither.

"This is the town jail now," said the man at the door, "and you got no business here."

"Jail? You got all the criminals in Irrakwa locked up in here? Bigger than any jail I ever seen, and I been to Philadelphia and Kingstown, Carthage and Dekane."

"Well it's bigger than we need, all right," said the man at the door, "seeing it was built to be a college, but it's a jail now, and there's enough folks locked up here for public safety that we don't wish it any smaller."

"I'm sorry to hear of a college that failed," said Alvin. "My wife's a schoolteacher and—"

"Never said it failed," said the man at the door. "It just moved."

Arthur Stuart laughed. "If it moved, how come it's still here?"

"You know it ain't legal to own no black child in Irrakwa," said the man at the door.

"Then it's a good thing that Arthur Stuart here is free," said Alvin, "and my ward, and almost a man, so pretty soon I won't have to drag him along with me on my travels."

"He'd never find his way home without me," said Arthur Stuart.

"The college," said the man at the door, looking at Arthur Stuart as if he'd never seen an uppity half-black youth before, "has a new building about a half mile down, after that point of land and well away from the water."

"Away from the water?" asked Alvin. "Turkey Creek has a good flow, but we ain't that far from the source, so even with snowmelt and rain put together, I bet you never had a flood reached even as high as this . . . jail."

The man's eyes narrowed. "You a naysayer?" he asked.

"I don't know what you mean," said Alvin.

"Sometimes he says nay, and sometimes he says aye or yea," said Arthur Stuart. "And sometimes he makes sense, but it's pretty unpredictable."

"Just thinking you might be careful talking about how flood-water can only get this high or that high," said the man at the door. "Folks locked up inside, they're all naysayers. Do you get my drift?"

"I'm just a stranger as knows something about water in other places," said Alvin, "but I don't pretend to know anything about Turkey Creek apart from what my eyes tell me, so I'd be curious to find out what it is that misguided people might say nay to."

"It's scientist stuff," said the man at the door, "so you can't hardly expect to understand it."

"So it comes from the college," said Alvin.

"It comes from Professor Rea, him being the dean of the college, not to mention the world's foremost expert on how water gets called and how water gets shunned."

"Well, he's the man I want to meet," said Alvin.

"Too bad for you," said the man at the door, "cause he's off in Philadelphia right now, showing other scientists about his findings and warning them about the danger and all."

"Well, here I got my hopes up that I might learn something, and now I'm disappointed," said Alvin, with as much sincerity as he could muster. He made a little hand sign to let Arthur Stuart know that this would be a very bad time for him to make fun.

"I expect somebody else at the college might be able to explain it in terms that you can understand," said the man at the door.

Again, Alvin made the hand sign and for once Arthur Stuart obeyed him. Since people assuming they were uneducated yokels always set Arthur Stuart off like a mockingbird, Alvin figured it was the fact that this was now a jail for naysayers that prompted him to keep quiet.

In a few minutes they set out downstream toward the town, heeding the man's advice that they stay well away from Turkey Creek, because the ground was boggy and could suck a man's boots right off his feet.

"Sounds like they got a powerful fear of water around here," said Arthur Stuart.

"More like they got a powerful fear of folks who say 'nay,'" said Alvin. "As to water, I've had some pretty bad experiences with it myself, over the years, so I don't mock those as has respect for that element."

They crested the rise, and there before them was a little hamlet dominated by a new brick building which was still being built

around the backside, and which wasn't half so fine as the one now serving as a jail. But the houses and shops and the college itself were all well up the slope, while down nearer the water, Alvin could see where the foundations of houses used to be, and where level streets had grown only one summer's worth of grass.

"Folks went to a lot of trouble to make those streets down there," said Arthur Stuart, "where they can be flat and smooth. Nothing half so good up higher on the slope, and nothing level at all."

"They moved this village in a hurry," said Alvin, "and they moved it away from the water, so I think we need to find out what cataclysm they're expecting."

"Can't be another flood like Noah's," said Arthur Stuart, "cause it covered even the high ground, and besides, we still got rainbows so God's not going to flood the world again."

"I think you oughtn't to speculate on what can and can't be, lessen you get taken for a naysayer," said Alvin, and when Arthur Stuart whooped, Alvin said sternly, "Ain't joking now, lad."

They ate a bit at the only working tavern, paying with a bit of cash money since Alvin didn't want to take the time to earn his bread by labor. He wanted to find somebody to explain all that hard science to him, so he'd understand why they were afraid of a flood only a mile downstream from the source of Turkey Creek.

First person they ran into at the college was a genial old fellow who was overseeing the bricklayers on the east side of the building. "You'd think they imagined that the back of the building was invisible, the careless way they let the wall drift out of plumb and the bricks line up all higgledy-piggledy," said the

"Well I don't," said Enos Walker, "because we only need one professor of elementology. My expertise is somewhere between mathematics and metaphysics."

"Not much overlap there," said Alvin.

"None at all," said Enos. "Like I said, I'm somewhere between them, and not properly inside either one. But I do know enough about Professor Rea's science to explain what he's been warning folks about."

"I hope it's simple enough for me to understand," said Alvin.

"Oh, my version of it is simple, all right," said Enos. "I'll be interested to see what you make of it."

And it was pretty simple. It seemed that Professor Rea had discovered a theory, which he was now certain was an absolute fact, that when mills ran on water power, they called to the water and brought on terrible floods. So mills were declared to be a danger to anyone living near any water that they drew power from.

"So that's why all the wheels were taken off the mills on Turkey Creek and broken up and burnt," said Arthur Stuart.

"Professor Rea never said to do any damage to anybody's property," said Enos Walker. "In fact, he said that the mills on Turkey Creek had already done so much harm that it would be a hundred years at least before the danger of mill-made flooding would be gone, so there was hardly any point in taking them down, as long as they weren't turning anymore."

Alvin nodded.

Arthur Stuart chuckled a little.

"Nothing funny here," said Alvin.

## He wanted to find somebody to explain all that hard science to him, so he'd understand why they were afraid of a flood only a mile downstream from the source of Turkey Creek.

man once he and Alvin and Arthur Stuart was sitting on chairs in a decent-size lecture hall. "I'm Enos Walker," he said, "and no, it's never Professor Walker, because there's only one professor at Rea College, and that's Professor Rea himself. I'm a mere lecturer and so you have the honor of calling me *Mister* Walker or even, if you're feeling neighborly, plain old Enos."

"We're just wondering how much you'd charge for a bit of lecturing today," said Alvin. "And by 'today' I mean here and now, and with luck no more than an hour's worth, or less."

"We're between school terms, and with all my scholars off helping with preparations for winter, I have time on my hands and language so welled up in my head that I'd be grateful for a chance to let some of it out, to relieve the pressure."

"I think he means there's no charge for talking," said Arthur Stuart.

"That is exactly what I mean, and I'm glad of a man who can say things straight out."

"That's Arthur Stuart for you," said Alvin. "And now he'll be silent and listen, I wager, while you explain to us why this town seems to think a deluge is coming, and anybody who doubts it gets tagged as a naysayer and plunked into a jail that used to be a college."

"Man at the jail said it was a science thing," said Arthur Stuart, "so I wonder if you lecture about the right kind of science."

"I was just thinking," said Arthur Stuart, "that it's a dang good thing nobody around here knows that you're a miller's son."

"Well, now Enos Walker, lecturer, is privy to that information, thanks to you and your mouth," said Alvin cheerfully.

"But Enos Walker, lecturer, doesn't believe a word of Professor Rea's theory about mill-invited flooding, so he's not likely to accuse you of anything," said Arthur Stuart.

Enos Walker raised an eyebrow. "In these parts, where Professor Rea is so well respected, it can be a perilous thing to say that a man doesn't 'believe a word' of his hydrological theories."

"Wouldn't want to be a naysayer," said Arthur Stuart, still chuckling.

"I'm not a naysayer," said Enos Walker. "Though it might be that in private, I might admit to sometimes being a naythinker."

"You're a man of science," said Alvin. "You know that Professor Rea can't possibly have a lick of evidence."

"It's a remarkable thing," said Enos Walker. "His best evidence is the absence of evidence. Meaning that whenever anybody points out that there are a lot of mills on a lot of rivers that never had a flood of any size, he just shakes his head and looks worried and says, 'Things have built up dangerously far, I'm afraid. Dangerously far. When the flood breaks loose, there'll be hell to pay wherever men have built these monstrous watermills to torture the water, to enslave





the water. How it longs to break free and wreak havoc over the land!”

When he spoke for Professor Rea, his voice took on a different tone, and since Arthur Stuart was a perfect mimic, he repeated the whole speech word for word, and Enos Walker laughed. “You don’t really sound like *him*,” he said, “but you sound exactly like me *trying* to sound like him.”

“So who’s in that jail?” Alvin asked.

“Well, all the millers, of course, because they weren’t even *allowed* to leave town. They’re all bound over for trial, though the trial won’t happen till the flood actually occurs, because until there’s harm, there’s no crime.”

“Sounds like a life sentence,” said Arthur Stuart. “Since I’m pretty sure that flood ain’t coming.”

“The rest in that jail are naysayers like you. Doesn’t take much. Just a laugh or even a cough while Professor Rea is holding forth on the evils of ‘damaging the balance of the elements with monstrous wheels stabbing into the hydrous heritage of humankind, three thousand times a day, a million times a year.’”

Arthur Stuart had to repeat that, too, only now he wasn’t imitating Enos Walker, he was going for the voice that Walker seemed to be trying to imitate. “How do you do that?” asked Enos Walker, dabbing at his eyes. “You never met the man, you never heard him, but now you sound just like him.”

“It’s his knack,” said Alvin.

“He imitates people’s voices?”

“Much deeper than that,” said Alvin. “Arthur Stuart never says so, but I think he understands the soul, and the voice just floats on top, so to speak.”

“Mr. Walker,” said Arthur Stuart, “since you know Professor Rea’s theory doesn’t hold water, so to speak, how can you keep silence and not correct him?”

Enos Walker nodded sadly. “I accept your accusation, my lad, and I confess my shame. I have a wife and two lovely daughters who are somewhat sought after by young men of this town. If I were to say my nays, I would lose my situation, so that even if by some oversight I were not locked up with the others, I would be forced to move elsewhere to seek my livelihood. I’d have no letter of recommendation to carry with me, and I’d have two weeping daughters and a scolding wife to contend with. So it is not fear of the jail that silences me, but weariness of life, weariness of my imagined life if I earned the lamentations and imprecations of that fearsome covey of females.”

“I am delighted,” said Arthur Stuart, “at how your language gets much more formal and buttside upmost when you’re saying something that you know is perfectly dishonest.”

“I try to teach the boy manners,” said Alvin, “but seeing as how I haven’t good manners myself, I fail regular.”

“Here’s how I see it,” said Enos Walker. “Not one of Professor Rea’s predictions has come true. Not a one. And people have gone to an enormous amount of trouble trying to prepare for those predictions to be fulfilled. Professor Rea has also forbidden the digging of wells, since pumps are as pernicious as mill wheels, so all these citizens will have to walk all the way to Turkey Creek every day and haul water. How long before the sheer weariness of it makes naysayers of them all?”

“People can go to a powerful lot of trouble for a pretty long time before they weary of it,” said Alvin, “as long as they’ve got some kind of expert telling them they have no choice, and there’s no other expert telling them that it’s all just empty chinwag.”

“But I can’t speak against it,” said Enos Walker, “because he’s the expert on the elements, and I’m only a wanderer between math and metaphysics.”

“So they all believe that *you* believe it,” said Alvin, “because you go along with it.”

“I and the other four teachers at this college,” said Enos. “And when any men of science make a pilgrimage to this place, to learn at the professor’s feet, they quickly realize that questions aren’t welcomed here. It’s an inconvenient thing, to be called a naysayer. So of course the regular folks here think that all the men of science are in agreement with Professor Rea.”

Alvin smiled. “I respect your self-knowledge, sir,” he said. “And I appreciate your dilemma, because when you’re in the devil’s pay, it’s best not to contradict the devil’s dogma.”

“Oh, no,” said Enos Walker, with a twinkle in his eye and an edge to his voice. “It’s the naysayers who are all in the pay of a conspiracy of millers, to try to cause people to doubt the danger so the millers can go on laboring to bring the floodwaters down upon us.”

“Without mills,” said Alvin, “where do they grind their corn?”

“They take it farther by wagon, and it costs them more,” said Enos Walker, “and a good many businesses are failing because people lack the money to pay for what they used to buy. And it’s hard to sell land here, so far back from the creek, so when people leave, they leave with almost nothing.”

“But that’s only money,” said Arthur Stuart, “and scientists and professors, they don’t care about such things.”

“They don’t when their wife has a very rich father, as Professor Rea’s wife has,” said Enos Walker. “But mine doesn’t.”

"I'm a miller's son," said Alvin, "and I've traveled this land a bit. I never saw nor heard of a flood caused by mills. I'm also a journeyman blacksmith by trade, with my anvil in this poke I carry with me."

"Your arms and shoulders proclaimed your trade from the moment I saw you. Except that you don't have one arm markedly stronger than the other."

"I use my arms equally, so my shirtmakers don't have trouble with their measurements. And *as* a blacksmith, I'm right glad there's no elementologist claiming that smithery brings down lightning strikes."

Enos Walker leaned forward. "Keep that thought to yourself, sir," he said. "Because it's only a matter of time before he realizes that the other elements shouldn't be neglected."

"Here's what I think," said Alvin. "In fact, I'll make a prediction."

"As a blacksmith or a miller's son?"

"As a man of science," said Alvin, "because I'm a bit more learned than most folks think. Here's my prediction. There will never be a flood of Turkey Creek, mills or no mills. And people

Enos Walker nodded gravely, then smiled. "Inconvenient as some of your predictions are to me personally, since moving is always hard work, it seems to me that even my wife can't blame me for causing my family to move away from a failed creek."

They took their leave of Enos Walker soon after, had supper in the tavern in the town, and then, when it was full dark, they walked out to the banks of the river.

Alvin's doodlebug felt its way upstream to the natural springs that gave rise to Turkey Creek. Then he plunged down into the bedrock, into the aquifer that fed the spring, and found a new channel for the water, bringing it to the surface where it would flow into Raccoon Creek, more than a mile to the east, and with a good rise of ground between them. Within a few minutes, the water in Turkey Creek slowed to a trickle, then a seep, then a series of puddles.

Only when the bed of the creek was dry did Alvin turn his attention to the college-turned-jail. He found all the locked doors and dissolved the locks so the doors wouldn't stay shut. But he sealed up the door where the guard slept, so he couldn't get out till somebody broke through the wall come morning.

‘I daresay that wherever Professor Rea finds believers,  
and mills are shut and their waterwheels broken up, *the  
water will cease to flow at all.*’

will stop hauling water from Turkey Creek by tomorrow morning, and will all be moved away within a couple of weeks. This town will be empty, and this college will be out of business, and your daughters will have to go elsewhere to find eager young men, though I doubt they'll lack for offers wherever they go."

"An interesting prediction," said Enos Walker.

"I'll go farther. I daresay that wherever Professor Rea finds believers, and mills are shut and their waterwheels broken up, the water will cease to flow at all, until all the people of Irrakwa and the United States live in terror of a visit from the Professor, and will refuse to let him open up his mouth."

"I beg only to know the evidence that leads to your predictions," said Enos Walker.

"I think this man is a denier of every theory," said Arthur Stuart.

"All true men of science are skeptical," said Enos Walker.

"The difference between your Professor Rea and me," said Alvin, "is that he predicts what water is going to do at some vague future time, while I predict what *'m* going to do while folks are sleeping in the town tonight."

Enos Walker looked as skeptical as a true man of science.

Alvin nodded to him, and passed his hand across the surface of the chair beside him. Then he caused water to condense out of the air onto the wooden seat of the chair until there was a bit of a puddle there.

Enos Walker raised an eyebrow.

Then Alvin caused the water to soak into the wood all at once, and it was instantly gone.

"I have a knack with voices," said Arthur Stuart, "and Alvin Maker has a knack with elements."

"Professor Rea and I work with the same subject matter," said Alvin, "though I don't believe he'd respect my credentials."

Soon the prisoners discovered that their doors were open, and not long afterward they began to wander out through the back wall, where Alvin had peeled off the entire façade of brick. By morning, the prisoners would all be far to the west, having crossed Turkey Creek without dampening the soles of their shoes.

"This is hard on the folks downstream," said Arthur Stuart.

"If they want water, they can build a mill and call for it to come," said Alvin.

"It's not their fault that they believed in a fool who called himself a scientist."

"It's their fault when they believe in *anybody* whose predictions always fail, and whose ideas violate common sense and experience. It's their fault when they punish folks for a difference of opinion. And the lesson of not falling for every hoax that calls itself science will be worth more than what they'll lose on their property value."

Alvin Smith and Arthur Stuart went overland by night, and this time they moved with haste, hearing the greensong and running like the wind, faster than deer, as fast as Reds once ran these lands when they were forest down to the shores of the lake.

Over the next few weeks the stories reached them of a goodly town, which had a college in it, that had to be abandoned because Turkey Creek dried up one night and never had water in it again, not even when it rained. And the strangest thing of all, according to these tales, was the fact that the millers had already left the place, tearing down their waterwheels.

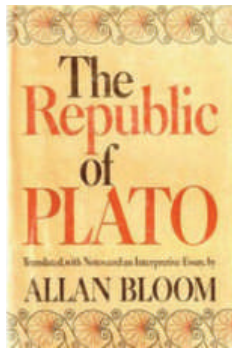
"So if you ever hear of millers deserting a steady stream, look to your wells!" said the gossips. "Because that's a stream that's going to fail, and a town that's going to die."

NR



## Books That Shaped Our Minds

The reading of good books is an essential component of soulcraft. They don't just build the intellect and provide ammunition for arguments; they help shape our hearts and form our worldview. We asked some prominent conservative thinkers which books influenced them most.



### William Kristol

*The Republic of Plato, translated with notes and an interpretive essay by Allan Bloom (Basic, 512 pp., \$22)*

**I**N the fall of 1970, a freshman at Harvard with “sophomore standing” (easy to get in those days), I showed up for the first meeting of my sophomore tutorial in the government department. The teacher was a first-year assistant professor, Mark Blitz, and the six of us in the group were to spend the entire term reading Plato’s *Republic*. Blitz told us to buy the Bloom translation and start reading Book One.

I remember opening the book in my dorm room the night before the next class, beginning to read Plato, making nothing much of it, and then turning to Bloom’s interpretive essay—and seeing, really for the first time, what it was to read a text carefully. I went through the first few pages of Bloom’s essay with an excitement and amazement I can still recall. One could say that it was the opening of an American mind.

In retrospect, I see that the unobtrusive education of my parents had prepared me for that moment. What’s more,

Blitz was a terrific teacher, so it may be that I would have begun to learn to read Plato without the benefit of Bloom’s essay. And the next year I took Harvey Mansfield’s lecture course on the history of political philosophy; Mansfield dazzled and challenged from the podium in an incomparable way. But of the books I have encountered, I may well owe the most to what we students came to call *Bloom’s Republic*.

*Mr. Kristol is the editor of The Weekly Standard.*

### Heather Mac Donald

*How to Do Things with Words, by J. L. Austin (Harvard, 192 pp., \$24.50)*

**I**ARRIVED at Cambridge University in 1978 with my head full of exceedingly odd propositions. There was no such thing as the human subject, for example—the self was just a rhetorical fiction, a mere linguistic construct. Any attempt at communicating meaning through words inevitably breaks down. Literature is only about itself. And the story that every poem or novel tells is of its own failure of signification.

These easily falsifiable propositions represented not the misfiring of my college education, but rather its complete triumph over my credulous self. I had just graduated from Yale, where I had been a passionate acolyte of “deconstruction,” the French-derived literary theory then at its zenith.

After Cambridge, I intended to return to my alma mater to start a Ph.D. in comparative literature, ultimately hoping to join that empyrean realm of deconstructionist professors whom I had so revered as an undergraduate. As part of a Cambridge course in linguistics, I picked up a slender volume that opened thus:

What I shall have to say here is neither difficult nor contentious; the only merit I should like to claim for it is that of being true, at least in parts. . . . It was for too long the assumption of philosophers that the business of a “statement” can only be to “describe” some state of affairs, or to “state some fact,” which it must do either truly or falsely.

Here was a completely different voice—lucid, ironic, conversational—from those I had encountered in my uncritical travails hacking through layers of deconstructive jargon. It belonged to the British analytic philosopher J. L. Austin, in *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). Austin was writing against positivistic philosophy, which held that language was primarily a means of making true or false statements about the world. Austin noticed that there are utterances to which the criteria of truth and falsity simply do not apply. If someone says “I take this woman to be my lawfully wedded wife” during a marriage ceremony, or “I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*” while smashing a bottle against its prow, he is not describing the world, he is changing it. His utterance, which Austin would label “performative,” has actually brought about a new social reality—he has become married, or he has christened a ship.

Austin developed a nuanced typology of the things we can do with words. His understanding of language as a dynamic part of human reality was light years away from the hothouse wallowing in failure, meaninglessness, and muteness that deconstruction promoted. As important, Austin’s linguistic investigations,

Austin developed  
a nuanced typology  
of the things we can  
do with words.

which came to be known as speech-act theory, were carefully empirical, unlike the ravings of deconstruction.

I did return to Yale’s comparative-literature department after Cambridge. But now, when I listened to Paul de Man “deconstructing” the same passage of Proust for the 100th time, I heard only madness and ignorance about the actual power and complexity of language. I left the Ph.D. program after just one semester, shaken, my idols and my plans for the future overturned. But I had been liberated from what would have probably been a lifetime of delusion, for which I thank J. L. Austin.

*Heather Mac Donald is a Thomas W. Smith fellow at the Manhattan Institute and a contributing editor of City Journal.*

## Arthur C. Brooks

The American Search for Economic Justice, by Peter McClelland

**I**N the mid 1990s, I arrived at Cornell University to begin a Ph.D. in economics. At 31, having only recently resumed my atypical education after a “gap decade,” I lacked the liberal-arts background that many of my classmates possessed. I knew my technical economics but craved some understanding of the philosophical debates that I could detect lurking beneath the math.

That’s where Peter McClelland came in. The veteran professor of economic history was unusually generous with his time and happy to meet with curious students. It didn’t take long for a one-off meeting to turn into a regular breakfast. He fielded all my queries about how scholars defined concepts such as “freedom” and “fairness,” and introduced me to his book *The American Search for Economic Justice* which I devoured.

This book may not be familiar to many readers today. But after two decades in academia and the policy world, I have yet to find a better primer on the moral and philosophical debates that underlie the study of economics. It’s a tremendous book, treating arguments from all sides fairly. It served as a fine introduction to many important thinkers—including a handful of American Enterprise Institute all-stars. And it served as my diving board into the world of big ideas: positive freedom versus negative liberty; the Lockean roots of the American experiment; and the difference between equity and equality as moral priorities.

Most broadly, McClelland’s book highlights the importance of the competition of ideas. It shows how equally high-quality thinkers can think they are directly disagreeing, when they are actually moving in orthogonal planes and misunderstanding one another. Brilliant men and women can bring different moral presuppositions to a discussion and come away with conclusions that are opposite to each other but that are equally consistent with their premises.

Peter McClelland taught me one other invaluable lesson: humility. Years after I’d left Cornell to finish my Ph.D. elsewhere and had established myself as a professor,

I found myself in Ithaca and wanted to thank him in person. I was publishing frequently in the academic journals and writing fairly regularly for the *Wall Street Journal*, and I presumptuously expected to find him happy to see me. I navigated familiar hallways and knocked on Professor McClelland’s door. He answered and looked at me—zero recognition. I introduced myself and reminded him of our breakfasts. No memory whatsoever of me or these meetings. To be clear, there was nothing wrong with him; it was just that I hadn’t made much of an impression.

He was delighted to hear that his book had been useful to me, however, and gave me another copy. I gave it to one of my own students. I don’t remember which one.

*Mr. Brooks is the president of the American Enterprise Institute and the author, most recently, of The Conservative Heart: How to Build a Fairer, Happier, and More Prosperous America.*



## Christopher Buckley

Radical Chic & Mau-Mauing the Flak-Catchers, by Tom Wolfe  
(Picador, 144 pp., \$15)

**B**OOK that most influenced me? Nice as it would be to say “The Bible,” that would be stretching it. And tempted as I am to say, “*Up from Liberalism*” or “*The Unmaking of a Mayor*”—both splendid books—that, too, would be a stretcher.

My dear old late dad, founder of NR, used to despair over my refusal, as a child, to read books. (As opposed to comic books, which I inhaled.) He actually bribed me to read *The Wizard of Oz*. I was, like, ten. He may have paid as

much as five bucks, a fair chunk of change in 1962.

But to answer the question: *Radical Chic*, by Tom Wolfe.

It’s probably unnecessary to remind you that this was Wolfe’s dazzling and hilarious takedown of Leonard Bernstein and the party he gave at his 13-room Manhattan apartment to raise money for the Black Panthers Defense Fund. That was January 4, 1970, a date that will live forever in Liberal infamy. All the beautiful people and *bien-pensants* and *soi-disants* were present. When Wolfe’s account of the event hit the newsstands (it was first serialized in *Chicago Today* in early 1971), they looked a whole lot less beautiful and were surely *pensanting* less *bien* of themselves.

Just recently, Michael Lewis (*Liar’s Poker*, *Moneyball*, etc.) wrote a marvelous appreciation of Wolfe in *Vanity Fair*. Wolfe has called Lewis “probably the best current writer in this country,” so author and subject were perfectly matched. Lewis reminds us that it was Wolfe who made so many of my generation want to be writers in the first place. His brilliance was matched by the sheer zest with which he went after his prey. And into the bargain, *he was one of us*—a conservative. Who’d a thunk it?

*Mr. Buckley is the author of many books, including the forthcoming novel The Relic Master.*

## Steven F. Hayward

The Abolition of Man, by C. S. Lewis  
(HarperOne, 128 pp., \$12.99)

**I**T is hard to single out just one book that decisively shaped my conservative outlook, especially since I was seemingly born “conservative by cell structure,” to borrow Whittaker Chambers’s phrase. NATIONAL REVIEW itself deserves much credit; I started reading NR in the eighth grade and kept it tucked in my back pocket as I passed out John Ashbrook “No Left Turns” buttons during the 1972 GOP primaries.

But I can point to one book that, at an early moment, deepened my philosophical conservatism: C. S. Lewis’s *The*



*Abolition of Man*. Still in high school, I became curious about Lewis's short preface to his anti-utopian novel *That Hideous Strength*, in which he said that the background teaching of the novel was explained in *Abolition*. In that book, published in 1943, Lewis deduced from some faint clues of contemporary literature what would become our descent into what we know today as postmodern nihilism. Lewis warned that the "fatal serialism of the modern imagination," its relentless moral reductionism that ends in total nihilism, would generate "men without chests." Our conquest of nature, he warned, would culminate in the conquest of *human* nature, which meant in practice the conquest of some men by other men. In other words, he foresaw the ideology of despotism, which could never remain soft or benevolent.

*The Abolition of Man* barely 100 pages long, culminates in a simple but elegant argument on behalf of natural law—nay, of human nature itself. Human nature is the most controversial and overarching political question of our time. (And perhaps we should start calling leftists

"human-nature deniers"?) Lewis reminds us, finally, that "a dogmatic belief in objective value is necessary to the very idea of a rule which is not a tyranny or an obedience which is not slavery."

*Mr. Hayward is the Ronald Reagan Distinguished Visiting Professor at Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Public Policy.*

## Virginia Postrel

### Knowledge and Decisions,

by Thomas Sowell (*Basic*, 422 pp., \$26)

ASKING me to name a book that has influenced my worldview is like asking Georges Seurat to name a color that was important to *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*. The problem is not just that there are so many. It's that the view emerges as much through their interactions as through their individual contributions.

I read Thomas Sowell's *Knowledge and Decisions* when I was a college student, shortly after its paperback publication in 1980. Sowell acknowledges on the first page his debt to F. A. Hayek's article "The Use of Knowledge in Society," but his exploration of dispersed knowledge and its implications for decision-making goes beyond Hayek's, bringing the analysis to bear on a wide array of economic and social puzzles: Why are small businesses typically financed by friends and family rather than by banks? Why did big-city political machines attract loyalty from immigrant voters who knew them to be corrupt?

And consider this Sowell observation, made all the more apt in the age of selfies: "Science and technology lead to far more complexity in *producing* cameras and film today, but that growing complexity among a handful of technicians permits far more simplicity (and ignorance) in the actual *use* of modern photographic equipment and materials by a mass of people."

Although *Knowledge and Decisions* is gracefully written and full of vivid examples, I originally found Sowell's careful



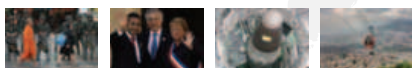
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parsing of abstract categories dense and difficult. When I reread the book in the mid 1990s, however, it seemed easy—because so many of its arguments had become integral to my own thinking.

Although the editors ask that I paint my thought in a single color, let me mention an essential complement: *Culture and Consumption* (1990), by anthropologist Grant McCracken. Economists take tastes as given, and the more they appreciate free markets, the more loath they are to consider where “subjective value” comes from. With so many social planners eager to substitute their own preferences for those of the diverse public, why raise the question? But McCracken insightfully and sympathetically explores how goods embody meanings that consumers value. His work influenced my own investigations of culture and consumption and bolstered my conviction that, as David Hume and Adam Smith knew long ago, examining why people buy the things they buy is essential to understanding life in a free, commercial society.

*Virginia Postrel is a columnist for Bloomberg View and the author, most recently, of The Power of Glamour: Longing and the Art of Visual Persuasion.*



## Daniel Hannan

**Reflections on the Revolution in France**, by Edmund Burke (a number of editions in print)

**I** STILL remember the shock I felt when I was about halfway through Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. It was 1991, and I was spending an undergraduate summer meandering slowly from

Chicago to New Orleans when, in the middle of a passage about something else, I came across a glancing reference to France’s “captive king.”

Stunned, I put the paperback down and stared round-eyed at my fellow Greyhound passengers. Until that moment, it had not properly hit me that the entire book, the most penetrating denunciation of revolutionary excess ever composed, had been written *before the Terror started*. As a piece of political prophecy, it stands unsurpassed.

Burke predicted the chaos, the repression, the arbitrary confiscations, the wanton executions, and even, with uncanny foresight, the Bonapartist dénouement:

In the weakness of one kind of authority, and in the fluctuation of all, the officers of an army will remain for some time mutinous and full of faction, until some popular general, who understands the art of conciliating the soldiery, and who possesses the true spirit of command, shall draw the eyes of all men upon himself. Armies will obey him on his personal account. . . . The moment in which that event shall happen, the person who commands the army is . . . the master of your whole republic.

There are never any prizes in politics for being right too early. Burke stood apart, an ascetic soothsayer, a lonely Irish prophet desecrating a future invisible to his contemporaries. He was right about America, right about Ireland, right about India, and, outstandingly, right about France. As usually happens, his peers never properly forgave him.

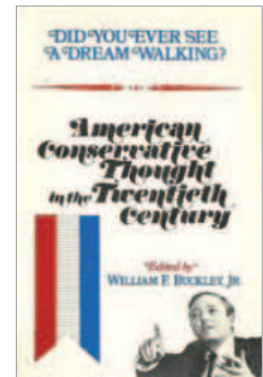
Only in retrospect do we glimpse the magnitude of his achievement. Burke remains the most eloquent critic of the rationalist modernism that has dominated political thinking from his time to ours. He saw the limits of planning; or, rather, he saw the necessity of the unplanned, the unreasoned, the organic.

Our age holds prejudice to be perhaps the most abominable of all sins. But the great Dubliner shows that life would become impossible if we tried to think through every new situation from first principles, disregarding both our own experience and the inherited wisdom of our people.

Burke wrote the manual for English-speaking rightists. Anglosphere conser-

vatism—cool, quizzical, empirical, ironic, restrained, an attitude rather than an ideology—has been a lot more benign than most foreign rightist doctrines. Such is his legacy; such our patrimony.

*Mr. Hannan, the author of Inventing Freedom: How the English-Speaking Peoples Made the Modern World, is a columnist for the Washington Examiner and CapX.*



## Charles R. Kesler

**Did You Ever See a Dream Walking? American Conservative Thought in the Twentieth Century**, edited by William F. Buckley Jr.

**I** READ this book in high school, or rather I read as much of it as my young mind could absorb. Actually, I read quite a bit more than I could absorb, which drove me to return to it again and again.

For Bill Buckley, it was an unusual project that must have cost him a lot of labor: a volume containing “quintessential samplings of conservative thought,” or as he put it more modestly, “an honest effort to transcribe one American conservative’s understanding of some of the recent sources of the illumination he lives by.”

Published in 1970 by Bobbs-Merrill as part of its American Heritage Series—an array of more than 70 anthologies meant for college use and covering all of American history (alas, I never got around to Senator George McGovern’s *Agricultural Thought in the Twentieth Century*)—the book carried different titles in hardcover and paperback. The latter appeared in academic livery, titled “American Conservative Thought in the Twentieth Century.” The former sported



“Did You Ever See a Dream Walking?” at the top of the cover, with the sober, descriptive title second, and an odd picture of WFB gesticulating in the lower-right corner. I deduce that “Dream Walking” was Bill’s choice, and “American Conservative Thought” the favorite title of the series editor, the formidable Leonard W. Levy. I never suspected that “Did You Ever See a Dream Walking?” was a popular song of the 1930s until, one sunny day at their house in Stamford, Pat started singing it and Bill joined in!

Under either title, the book was a terrific introduction to conservatism, not exactly a greatest-hits package or a best-of assortment but a stimulating collection of writers and thinkers who—whether agreeing or disagreeing—had influenced Bill. Since he practically was American conservatism at that point, the connection was vivid, exciting. Here were the great who happened to be his friends (e.g., Milton Friedman), his friends who happened to be great (e.g., James Burnham), early influences (e.g., Albert Jay Nock), later influences (e.g., Harry V. Jaffa), high-minded choices (e.g., John Courtney Murray, Leo Strauss, Michael Oakeshott), surprises (Jane Jacobs), and, of course, incipient apostates (Garry Wills). Only

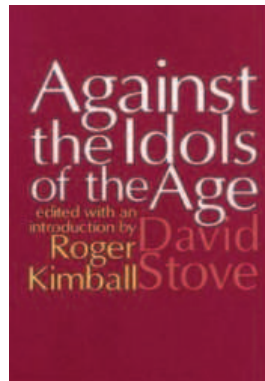
The book was a collection of writers and thinkers who had influenced WFB.

two contributors appeared twice: Nock and Whittaker Chambers.

Almost two decades later, I told Bill how much the book had meant to me and urged him to do a second edition, which led eventually to our sequel, *Keeping the Tablets: Modern American Conservative Thought* (1988). No song titles for us.

But the song had answered its own question, and anyone who knew Bill Buckley or his 1970 anthology would want to join in. “Did you ever see a dream walking? Well, I did.”

*Mr. Kesler, a professor of government and political science at Claremont McKenna College and Claremont Graduate University, is the editor of the Claremont Review of Books.*



## Roger Kimball

**Against the Idols of the Age,**  
by David Stove, edited and with  
an introduction by Roger Kimball  
(Transaction, 347 pp., \$35.95)

ANYONE interested in ideas will fondly recall the intellectual excitement that comes with discovering a writer who opens up new avenues of insight. For most of us, such discoveries taper off with the end of college or graduate school. We

continue to read, stumble occasionally on excellent authors who had been hitherto unknown to us, but that frisson of discovery becomes rarer and rarer. It was with immense gratitude, then, that I first encountered the work of the Australian philosopher David Stove (1927–94) in 1996, when I had already achieved the venerable age of 40.

Among other things, Stove supplied some unanswerable arguments to bolster my longstanding prejudice against the work of Thomas “Mr. Paradigm Change” Kuhn. I had always suspected that there was something fishy about Kuhn’s account of the way scientific theories develop. Stove showed that I didn’t know the half of it. Kuhn had always denied that he was an irrationalist. But Stove showed that Kuhn’s celebrated notion of “paradigm change” provided not an account but a repudiation of scientific development. Kuhn covertly substituted sociology and history for logic, thus winding up with a picture of science in which progress is illusory and no scientific theory can be said to be better or worse than another. Stove traced Kuhn’s irrationalism back through Karl Popper’s philoso-

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phy of science (another fishy specimen) and ultimately to Hume's skepticism about the cogency of inductive arguments.

Popper long ago became part of the intellectual atmosphere, his assumptions taken for granted even by those who hadn't read him. (The idea that a proposition isn't really scientific unless it is *falsifiable* is an especially popular bit of Popperism.) But Stove shows that Popper's philosophy of science is actually an efficient engine for generating irrational beliefs about what counts as scientific knowledge. At the center of Popper's thinking about the philosophy of science is a profound skepticism about the rationality of inductive reasoning. Popper was a deductivist: He dreamt of constructing a philosophy of science based solely on the resources of logic. He was also an empiricist: He admitted no source of knowledge beyond experience. As Stove shows, the combination of empiricism and deductivism is a prescription for irrationalism and cognitive impotence. An empiricist says that no propositions other than propositions about the observed can be a reason to believe a contingent proposition about the unobserved; an empiricist who is also a deductivist is forced to conclude that there can be no reasons *at all* to believe any contingent proposition about the unobserved.

Quite apart from being a devastatingly astute philosophical critic, Stove was one of the best and funniest philosophical writers in the history of the discipline. I know, I know: That is a large claim. But please, read a dozen pages of his work before suggesting that I exaggerate. I have made it easy for you by putting together a plump anthology of Stove's work called "Against the Idols of the Age." It includes a generous helping of Stove's work on irrationalism in the philosophy of science as well as key bits of his landmark attack on certain aspects of Darwinian theory (the work of the preposterous Richard Dawkins is a prominent target) and a generous sampling of his occasional essays.

Among educated persons today, any suggestion that aspects of Darwinian theory are suspect is instantly met with contempt, pity, derision—anything but a mind open to rational persuasion. Crackpot creationists are anti-Darwinian, ergo anyone who challenges Darwinian dogma must be a creationist, a crackpot, or both. This is not the place to rehearse Stove's

arguments; let me just plead that you reserve judgment until you read what Stove has to say.

When I tell you that one of Stove's essays is titled "The Intellectual Capacity of Women," and that its first sentence reads "I believe that the intellectual capacity of women is on the whole inferior to that of men," you will understand that David Stove was not a man who shied away from controversy. His work probably requires a trigger warning on today's campuses, but that is just one more reason it is worth reading.

*Mr. Kimball is the publisher of Encounter Books and the editor of The New Criterion.*

## John J. Miller

### The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945.

by George H. Nash (ISI, 660 pp., \$25)

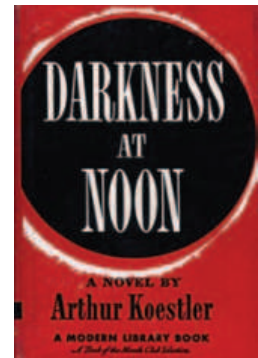
**M**EETING Russell Kirk was one of the great thrills of my early life as a conservative. I'd signed up for a weekend for college students at Kirk's home in Mecosta, Mich., sponsored by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. We heard lectures on Edmund Burke, walked in the woods, and listened to ghost stories by candlelight. Kirk signed my copy of *The Conservative Mind*.

The most important moment for me took place when Kirk held up a book with a blue jacket. "All of you must read this," he said. It was *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945*. The author, George H. Nash, was sitting next to me. When I got back to the University of Michigan, I checked out a copy from the library and read it cover to cover.

Up to then, I had not really understood why conservatives argued with one another so much. Wasn't it enough to fight the schemes of the Left? Couldn't the traditionalists, libertarians, and neo-conservatives just get along? Nash explained it all: the origins of their ideas, the major personalities behind them, and why they so often seemed to clash. And when I started to hear conservatives make their in-group references to immanentizing the eschaton, I actually knew what they meant.

I also discovered that I was an instinctive fusionist: a disciple of Frank S. Meyer and his school of ecumenical conservatism. It recognizes divisions on the right but seeks to make common cause as we struggle against the progressives who insist that it's possible to create heaven on earth—i.e., the utopians who strive to immanentize the eschaton.

Today, Nash is a friend. A quarter century ago, his book was a revelation.



## Elliott Abrams

### Darkness at Noon, by Arthur Koestler (Scribner, 288 pp., \$16)

**I**T was in 1970 that, as a graduate student in London, I read *Darkness at Noon*. Of course I'd heard of the book and knew it had something to do with Russia and Stalin. But I was unprepared for the brilliance and depth of its understanding of human nature and political change.

College had left me with the knowledge that categories such as "good" and "bad" governments were far more complex than they seemed and often ambiguous. In developing societies, was corruption plain bad—or a sign of movement away from tribal loyalties toward a market economy? When was it defensible and in fact essential for a democracy to violate constitutional rights to crush a new movement, such as Nazism, that seemed likely to end democracy entirely?

There were many answers to these questions. But the Stalinist period and the Soviet system seemed so purely evil as to be incomprehensible: How could sane men commit such vast crimes, decade after decade? How could a Party that proclaimed its responsibilities to History and



the improvement of Man maintain the loyalties even of those whom it was crushing mercilessly?

And then I read Koestler. *Darkness at Noon* explained how it was possible for loyalties to deepen precisely as the crimes expanded—for only the deepest commitment to the Party's promise of Tomorrow could possibly justify the evil it was committing. And of course as years and decades went by, to have confronted any part of the truth would have meant that the official's life in the Party was monstrous and evil itself; so the requirements of sanity and the desire to avoid suicide led back to believing in the Party again.

For mere Party members (including those in the West), not up to their necks in blood, it was still the case that any crime could be excused or denied to keep the faith intact and to give meaning to their lives.

Sixty years after Koestler wrote his masterpiece, Natan Sharansky (once a prisoner in the Soviet Gulag himself) described in his book *The Case for Democracy* how in "fear societies" (as opposed to free ones) the mass of people engage in "doublethink" to survive: They know what they have been taught and must say publicly, but what they actually think is very different. Over time and in the face of reality, the number of doublethinkers will increase while the number of true believers diminishes, a phenomenon we saw in the Soviet Union and see now in China. This gives hope for change.

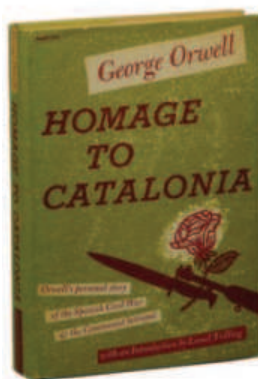
But there are always true believers, ready to commit and to justify any act of barbarism in the name of the movement, the Party, or the Leader. What Koestler explained was not only that they existed and would always exist, but that reality would lead them to deepen their commitments because in no other way could they justify their lives. The ends justified the means because nothing else possibly could.

The lesson was clear enough: The evil and inhumanity embodied by Communism had to be fought; it would not collapse of its own weight, nor would it lack for new generations of acolytes with thumbscrews.

And it was clear that only the United States had the resources to lead a military and political battle such as this successfully. Two years later, I was volunteering for the presidential campaign of Senator Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson, and then join-

ing his staff, and then Pat Moynihan's, and then Ronald Reagan's. No single volume pointed me that way, and by the mid 1970s Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* had also appeared, but Koestler's insights into the Stalinist system have never been surpassed.

*Mr. Abrams is the senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and the author of Tested by Zion: The Bush Administration and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.*



## Garry Kasparov

*Homage to Catalonia, by George Orwell  
(a number of editions in print)*

**I** MIGHT hurt my reputation by saying I don't recall exactly when I read George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, but I remember the impact it had on me very well. I am sure it was at the end of the 1980s, because I read it in Russian and such books had been banned in the USSR before perestroika. This was the moment in which Mikhail Gorbachev was desperately trying to save the Soviet Union by promising "socialism with a human face." My reply at the time was that Frankenstein's monster also had a human face, and Orwell's book did much to clarify this for me. The book also has many memorable lines, such as "There are occasions when it pays better to fight and be beaten than not to fight at all."

I was raised in a family of skeptics in Baku, so I had few illusions about the Soviet leadership. But the "good Lenin, bad Stalin" mindset was still pervasive, with its fairy tale that Communism could, with the right adjustments, be cleaned up

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and made to work for the people. *Homage to Catalonia* detailed how the USSR sabotaged its supposed socialist allies before and during the Spanish Civil War (1936–39). The viciousness of the betrayal—fighting harder against the Catalan Left than against Franco and thereby guaranteeing the Fascist victory—made it clear that Soviet socialism was about power alone. Orwell, fighting for the doomed Republican volunteers and nearly dying for the cause, showed keen intuition in analyzing the brutally cynical reality of the USSR—intuition that was confirmed when some of the Soviet archives were opened in the 1990s.

The horrific details of *The Gulag Archipelago*, the ingenious allegories of *Animal Farm* and *1984*, and the heroic storytelling of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* deserve honorable mentions in my development. But it was *Catalonia*'s first-person nonfiction that confirmed to me that the Communist system was designed from the start not to bring liberation to the masses but to establish totalitarian domination. It couldn't be reformed or humanized; it had to be destroyed.

Mr. Kasparov, chairman of the New York-based Human Rights Foundation, is the author of *Winter Is Coming: Why Vladimir Putin and the Enemies of the Free World Must Be Stopped*.

## Natan Sharansky

*"Reflections on Progress, Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom,"*  
an essay by Andrei Sakharov

THERE were many books that moved me during my years as a dissident and political prisoner in the Soviet Union. As a student I read Leon Uris's *Exodus*, which connected me to the Jewish people and its thousands of years of history. In prison, waiting for my trial, I devoured the classics, from *Antigone* and Xenophon's writings on Socrates to *Hamlet* and *Don Quixote*, which together gave me solace in the knowledge that men of all ages had faced the struggles I faced, and conquered their earthly fears in the name of higher principles.

Yet the work that most influenced my thinking and my life course was an essay,

the first written and circulated by prized scientist Andrei Sakharov in his journey from loyal Soviet citizen to outspoken critic of the regime. When this essay began circulating in the underground of the Moscow intelligentsia during the summer of 1968, I was myself a student in Russia's premier scientific academy, a rare accomplishment for a Jew. There we were encouraged to focus on the "eternal"—the laws of nature, the ideas of Newton—and not to worry about the changing world of ideology and politics. As I came increasingly to question the Communist regime, I found myself torn between pursuing a prestigious career in silence and openly following my conscience.

Sakharov, for his part, was by then the most highly esteemed scientist in the Soviet Union, and his essay, titled "Re-

Sakharov argued that there could be no scientific advancement without freedom of thought.

flections on Progress, Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom," sent shock waves through our community. In it, he argued that there could be no scientific advancement without freedom of thought, and that the free world had in fact paved the way for everything Soviet scientists had accomplished—that we were merely skiers following in others' tracks. It is hard to overstate how daring these words were at the time, and how electrifying their pronouncement. Here was someone at the pinnacle of our profession who could no longer hold his tongue about Soviet repression, and who was willing to risk everything to say what he believed.

Reading Sakharov's words, I realized that there was no future for the Communist system or its science. Even more important, his example showed me—and thousands like me—the triumph of truth over worldly success and even survival. He reminded us that the real eternal value is inner freedom, and helped us feel the exhilaration and deep relief of someone who had at last become free.

Mr. Sharansky is an Israeli author, politician, and human-rights activist who spent nine years in Soviet prisons.

## William Voegeli

*Up in the Old Hotel*, by Joseph Mitchell  
(Vintage, 736 pp., \$18)

WHEN the oldest, most important conservative publication asks a conservative writer to name a book that has influenced him, the implied preference is for a book about politics. I'm impressed, though, by something anti-political that William F. Buckley Jr. said at the dinner celebrating NATIONAL REVIEW's tenth anniversary: "I curse this century above all things for its having given all sentient beings very little alternative than to occupy themselves with politics." This necessity frustrated "the homelier, and headier, pleasure of duty and restraint, of order and peace, of self-discipline and self-cultivation." The idea that the space needed for a life well lived is made possible by politics, but that such a life is not necessarily devoted to politics, aligns with an observation Buckley sometimes quoted: Harold Nicolson, the English diplomat and writer, said that 99 people out of 100 are interesting . . . and the 100th, by virtue of being so unusual, is also kind of interesting.

A book that captures and conveys the sense that each of us has a walk-on role in many movies but is the star of our own smash hit is *Up in the Old Hotel*, by Joseph Mitchell. Published in 1992, four years before the author's death at the age of 87, *Hotel* gathers Mitchell's *New Yorker* articles from the 1930s through the 1960s. It portrays mid-century New York City from the bottom up and the middle out: street preachers, high-rise-construction workers, diner proprietors, and the man whose job title in the Bureau of Marine Fisheries of the New York State Conservation Department is Shellfish Protector.

With straightforward but beautifully measured language, Mitchell tells each one's story, imparting no political or moral lesson other than that everyone has a story. But that's a profound lesson. The people we meet in *Up in the Old Hotel* remind us that the crucial part of adhering to the ancient impera-



tive to know thyself is to remember that we dwell among other selves, who live and see their lives from the inside out. We owe it, both to them and to the aspiration to be “people on whom nothing is lost,” in Henry James’s phrase, to try to understand others’ lives from the outside in.

Joseph Mitchell had a story of his own. He seems to have been more confident that his subjects’ tales were worth writing than that they would be considered worth reading. A recent biography makes clear that Mitchell was not bashful about polishing quotes and presenting composite characters. When the extravagantly eccentric Joe Gould, the subject of his final story, turned out to be a fraud, Mitchell developed one of history’s most famous cases of writer’s block, going to the *New Yorker* office every workday for 30 years, but never turning in another piece. If one moral of his story is that Mitchell turned out to be a better writer than reporter, a more important one is that getting at certain truths requires going around rather than through the facts.

*Mr. Voegeli is a senior editor of the Claremont Review of Books and the author of The Pity Party: A Mean-Spirited Diatribe against Liberal Compassion.*



## Armond White

*Nashville, directed by Robert Altman*

**C**OINCIDENT with my undergraduate introduction to John Dos Passos’s *U.S.A.* trilogy, *Ragtime*, by E. L. Doctorow, appeared. Both represented

an idea of the Great American Novel—a work that encompassed true local experience and national self-awareness. But also coincidentally, Robert Altman’s *Nashville* premiered that same year, 1975. Thus, the Great American Movie laid waste to the notion of the Great American Novel.

I’d been prepared for *Nashville* by Altman’s *California Split* from the previous year. I was 21, discovering people from outside my native environment of various family and neighborhood events and college-life encounters (and pondering how I did or did not fit in). *California Splits* roiling low-life atmosphere opened my eyes to *e pluribus unum*; its view of transient relationships confirmed my most sober existential suspicions. In *Nashville*, Altman expanded that awareness. Neither Dos Passos nor Doctorow had anything on Altman’s insight into America’s multiplicity—from humorous happenstance to devastating tragedy. The film’s 24 characters set a precedent, but it’s the singularity of each (Altman’s consistent theme of the individual within the community) that impressed. The film’s narrative clarity was amazing and insightful. As a moral and political way to look at the world, only D. W. Griffith’s four-part, global 1916 film *Intolerance* was comparable.

*Nashville*’s country-music setting provided a folkloric metric alongside the aesthetic breakthroughs of Altman’s wide-screen, all-encompassing imagery and his multitrack sound recording. (Every character has a distinct voice, updating the classic Greek chorus with an American chorus of autonomous members.) No other literary or audiovisual work is more vivifying. The film’s opening song, “(We Must Be Doing Something Right to Last) 200 Years,” wasn’t just a pre-bicentennial jape; it also anticipated post-9/11 dol-drums—the same genuine cynicism as the film’s closing song, “It Don’t Worry Me.”

Keeping multifarious America balanced was *Nashville*’s primary lesson—a life lesson I find useful today. When the film’s central figure, singer Barbara Jean (Ronee Blakley), recovered from a nervous breakdown, was shown reading Faulkner’s *Light in August*, it was all a literary film-lover

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needed to confirm that *Nashville* was, indeed, the masterpiece that explained what the U.S., as social experiment and everyday Calvary, was all about.

*Mr. White, a film critic for NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE, received the American Book Awards' Anti-Censorship Award. He is the author of The Resistance: Ten Years of Pop Culture That Shook the World and the forthcoming What We Don't Talk about When We Talk about the Movies.*



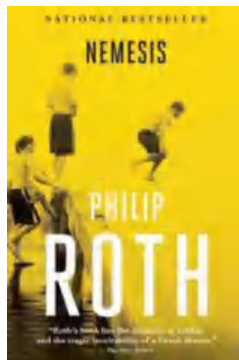
## Wilfred M. McClay

*The Leopard*, by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa (Pantheon, 336 pp., \$16)

**D**URING my time as a graduate student in history at Johns Hopkins, I was fortunate enough to get to know the historian John Lukacs, whose splendid (and still underappreciated) book *Historical Consciousness* among his many other writings, served as a powerful antidote to the regnant diseases of modern historiography. It would be entirely appropriate to single out that book here, both because of its influence on me and because I am confident that its value will endure. But the greatest of Lukacs's gifts to me was his urgent recommendation that I read Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's elegant novel, *Il Gattopardo* or *The Leopard*. I took his advice and have been the better for it ever since. As my friends can attest, I evangelize for the book all the time—and for the beautiful and remarkably faithful Visconti-directed film based on the book—and I even keep a small stack of paperback copies in my office to hand out to interested students.

*The Leopard* tells the story of a Sicilian aristocrat living at the time of the Risorgimento who finds himself engulfed by the tides of history, and it records in vivid detail his shrewd responses to those tides, along with his pessimism and his honest distaste for much of what that history was forcing him to accommodate. It is a Tocquevillean novel, descriptive of a Tocquevillean moment, one of those great historical junctures at which one social order gives way to another and every man and woman must figure out an honorable way forward through the chaos and uncharted territory of a brave new world, with its new slogans, new possibilities, new terrors, and new hypocrisies. Lampedusa wrote nothing else of similar scope, and *The Leopard* was not published until a year after his death. Yet this single novel is perfectly realized, with exquisite description, penetrating social analysis, and refined, haunting meditations on the human condition. It is a book every conservative should read, and ponder.

*Mr. McClay holds the G. T. and Libby Blankenship Chair in the History of Liberty at the University of Oklahoma.*



## David Gelernter

*Nemesis*, by Philip Roth (Vintage, 304 pp., \$15.95)

**P**HILIP ROTH's short novel *Nemesis* appeared in 2010 and was widely praised, in ways that mainly missed a central point.

Roth says it is his last novel. Its parts fit together more beautifully than do those in any previous Roth work. (Usually Roth gives the impression of

starting with people and ambience and concocting a plot as he goes along.)

But the most compelling thing about *Nemesis* is how Roth, an aggressive atheist, has written a masterpiece of that most Jewish of all genres, the argument with God.

He has dedicated his career to insisting that he is a *social Jew*, a *secular Zionist*. He never claimed to know anything about Judaism except that it was ridiculous. In his early career, he published novels that offended practicing Jews of every stripe.

In this last novel, the hero is not terribly bright, not witty, trained as a phys-ed teacher; obsessed with doing what is good and right. For Roth in his old age, that

**Roth, an aggressive atheist, has written a masterpiece of that most Jewish of all genres, the argument with God.**

obsession is Judaism. In the summer of 1944, there is a polio epidemic in Newark. The hero is torn between joining his fiancée in the healthy mountains or staying with the playground boys he supervises in "equatorial Newark," where it is hot and dangerous—and the young boys in his charge are starting to catch polio and, in some cases, die. He joins his fiancée but hates himself, and imposes on himself an awful penance. He spends the rest of his life alone, struggling with God nearly hand to hand, a violent grudge match. To cripple innocent children? To *kill* innocent children? *That* is God's justice? There is a related argument in the Talmud in which God's response to these questions is "Silence! *That has occurred to me.*"

Roth brought at last to *the* religious question, Roth unable to leave God alone no matter how many times he has insisted that there is no God, Roth confronting, in a movingly beautiful way, the same question that Jonah and Job and Abraham confronted, Philip "Portnoy" Roth, is an awe-striking moment in modern literary history.

*Mr. Gelernter is a professor of computer science at Yale University and a contributing editor of The Weekly Standard.*





## Brad Thor

*Great Expectations*, by Charles Dickens  
(a number of editions in print)

**C**HOOSING one book that has had the greatest impact on me is no easy task. I read all the time, and many books have profoundly shaped who I am. In fact, as I write this, I am halfway through *Beyond Band of Brothers: The War Memoirs of Major Dick Winter*, which is fantastic and has me looking at my own life in ways I never before imagined.

The book that has had the greatest impact on me, though, is *Great Expectations*, by Charles Dickens. Simply put: I love this book and it has resonated with me for decades: the characters, the lessons about human nature, and—believe it or not—even the lessons about business.

Those business lessons, in fact, played into my decision to move my family from Chicago to Nashville. Capital, as Dickens so wisely wrote, is “portable property.” It also represents freedom; the freedom to choose what you want to do, where you want to do it, and how you want to live your life.

*Great Expectations* is a wonderful novel packed with insight, laughter, joy, deceit, and consequence, all wrapped up with amazing and, I dare say, timeless, wisdom—of which, two lines are worth sharing here. The first is a reminder about summoning courage to do the right thing: “In a word, I was too cowardly to do what I knew to be right, as I had been too cowardly to avoid doing what I knew to be wrong.” The second is about avoiding deception: “Take nothing on its looks; take everything on evidence. There’s no better rule.”

*Mr. Thor’s most recent novel is Code of Conduct.*

## P. J. O’Rourke

*Lord of the Flies*, by William Golding  
(a number of editions in print)

**I** READ *Lord of the Flies* in the early 1960s, when I was about 15. The story of marooned schoolboys did not, at the time, have a beneficial effect on my thinking. I was irked and bored by Ralph, the Eagle Scout—y exemplar of the political-leadership type. I felt the same contempt for Piggy, the symbolic intellectual, as his fellows did. I liked Jack and his Beast-propitiating tribe of colorful pig hunters.

Thus it’s no surprise that, later in the 1960s, I joined the chanting, dancing, face-painting, “Off the Capitalist Pig” primitivists of the counterculture.

But this turned out to be, in life as in literature, less fun and more scary than it was meant to be. The pig head on a stake began to smell, the way hippies did, and attract

The Jacks of the counterculture turned out to be **not-very-nice people**.

vermin, like Charles Manson. The Jacks of the counterculture—the Mark Rudds, the Bernardine Dohrns, the Bill Ayerses, even the Abbie Hoffmans—turned out to be not-very-nice people.

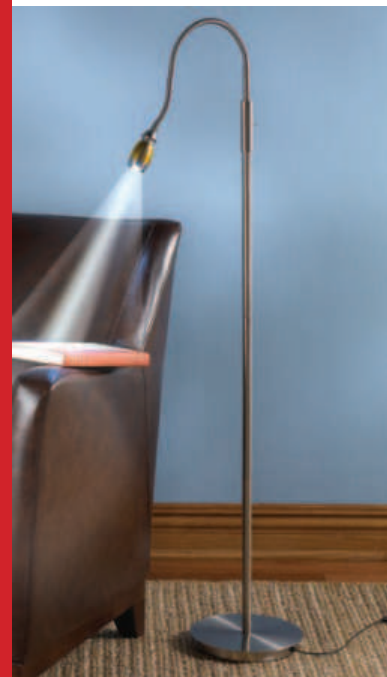
And then, on March 6, 1970, some of those not-very-nice people blew themselves up. They’d been trying to build a bomb in a townhouse on West 11th Street in Greenwich Village. The bomb was packed with nails and was going to be detonated at a dance for enlisted personnel at Fort Dix, N.J.

I went to New York and stood outside the police tape around the rubble at 18 West 11th—realizing, a little late, what *Lord of the Flies* was about.

The structure of civilization is as fragile as was the structure of that beautiful Greek Revival townhouse built in 1845. Built, incidentally, not by a political-leader Ralph or an intellectual Piggy, much less by any Jack-red-in-tooth-and-claw. It was built by Charles E. Merrill, founder of Merrill Lynch.

*Mr. O’Rourke, a political satirist, is the H. L. Mencken Research Fellow at the Cato Institute and a writer for The Weekly Standard.*

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# Forward to The Future

ROSS DOUTHAT

**L**ATE last month, American pop culture celebrated “Back to the Future Day”—marking the date, order of the day, and the battle lines established by Reagan’s revolution still define the partisan divide. In our social arguments, where we’re still having wrestling matches—over abortion, ro- tation of a pleasant but hardly memorable sequel, and it felt almost like a wayward people *not* to come to grips with the most striking thing about *Back to the Future*’s 30th anniversary: that we’re now as from the Reagan 1980s as the teenage Marty was from his parents’ 1950s, and yet the gulf of years separating us from 1985 feels far narrower than the distance from the Eisenhower era that the original film used to such great effect.

The power of the *Back to the Future* depended not just on an arbitrary 30-year period, that is, but on how culturally America had changed across those decades: Marty’s adolescence and his parents’ courtship lay on opposite sides (among many other things) rock ‘n’ roll, civil rights, Vietnam, the sexual revolution, drug culture, the moon landing, feminism, the apocalyptic ‘70s, and, finally, the conservative turn that made this magazine’s 30th anniversary a happy one.

Whereas if you remain in *Back to the Future* now and sent Martina McFly back to ‘85, you would have a lot of jokes about life without the iPhone, some shocking shoulder pads, and some sort of “combined critique of Reagan-era unenlightenment on same-sex marriage. But you wouldn’t have the sense of visiting a past that is actually another country.

Since NATIONAL REVIEW spans the same 60 years as the McFly-family saga, *Back to the Future* offers a useful prism through which to view our situation as landscape is defined by . . . the recycling of comic-book properties developed by the first 30 years, the history that William Buckley Jr. wanted to stand athwart after it proceeded at a breakneck pace. But then, as Kurt Anderson pointed out in *Sunday* Fair several years ago: Communism’s fall, there has been a general slowing, a sense of drift and repetition, a feeling that American society is somehow stuck in place.

In the economic realm, what Tyler Cowen has called our “great stagnation” can be quantified—in slow wage growth, slow productivity growth, below-replacement fertility rates, slowing rates of innovation in non-Silicon Valley sectors. But it’s readily apparent in non-quantifiable areas as well. In our politics, where gridlock and dysfunction are the order of the day, and the battle lines established by Reagan’s revolution still define the partisan divide. In our social arguments, where we’re still having wrestling matches—over abortion, ro- tation of a pleasant but hardly memorable sequel, and it felt almost like a wayward people *not* to come to grips with the most striking thing about *Back to the Future*’s 30th anniversary: that we’re now as from the Reagan 1980s as the teenage Marty was from his parents’ 1950s, and yet the gulf of years separating us from 1985 feels far narrower than the distance from the Eisenhower era that the original film used to such great effect.

1980 or 1970, you’d examined a comparable picture from 27 years earlier—from 1963 and 1953 and 1943, respectively—it would be a glimpse back into an unmistakably different world.

Global politics since the Cold War feels stagnant as well. We might have expected that by now we’d be locked in a race with China or Japan to colonize Mars—that, that is, we weren’t recovering from the Eugenics Wars that the original *Trek* expected to arrive sometime in the 1990s. Instead, we’re dealing with issues (from an aggressive Russia to, yes, Libyan-linked terrorist groups) that Marty and “Doc” Brown would recognize immediately. (Though in fairness, we do make movies about colonizing Mars, and the special effects are excellent.)

The word for this kind of civilizational situation is “decadence.” Not the decadence of pure debauchery—there’s some of that available today, but public morals in the West probably hit bottom in the 1970s, not in our own era of stagnation. Rather it’s decadence as defined by Jacques Barzun:

“Only on homosexuality has there been dramatic change.” In our religious controversies, where the bold, fresh, exciting pontificate of Francis has revealed that Western Christians are ready . . . to have exactly the same theological debates we had in 1975.

And then there’s pop culture itself. In *Back to the Future*, Marty McFly invaded his father’s sleep dressed as “Darth Vader from the planet Vulcan.” Thirty years later, the biggest blockbuster of 2015 promises to be about . . . Darth Vader’s grandchildren. It will be directed by a filmmaker who’s coming off rebooting *Star Trek*. And the wider cinematic landscape is defined by . . . the recycling of comic-book properties developed by the first 30 years, the history that William Buckley Jr. wanted to stand athwart after it proceeded at a breakneck pace. But then, as Kurt Anderson pointed out in *Sunday* Fair several years ago: Communism’s fall, there has been a general slowing, a sense of drift and repetition, a feeling that American society is somehow stuck in place.

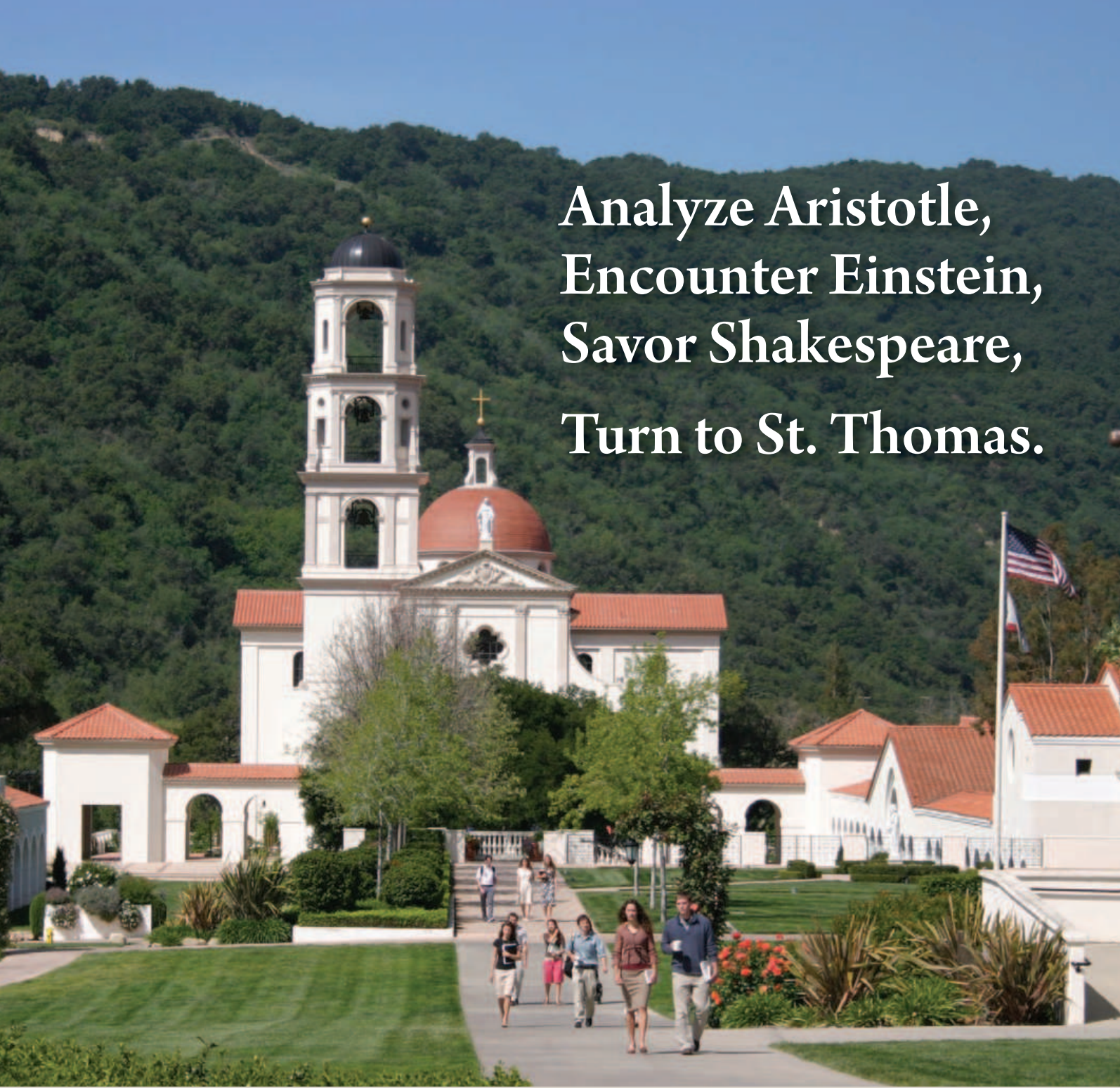
Barzun wrote these words in the late 1990s; today it’s hard to imagine a better distillation of our situation. And the doomsayers, decadent periods need not give way swiftly to declines and falls: They can last—especially in a society produced by oceans from the mass migrations presently yanking a decadent Europe back into history—for generations, until some original threat or internal revival finally pushes us in a different, more dynamic age.

Which suggests an irony for Western and particularly for American conservatives. In a less decadent era, our forefathers hoped to stop the march of history, to redirect its rushing course. In our era, history seems to have slowed to a depressing, repetitious crawl, and it might be our mission to start it moving once again.

Not long ago . . . I came across an archival photograph of Ian Schrager and Steve Rubell with a dozen of their young staff at Morgans, the boutique hotel, which suggests an irony for Western and particularly for American conservatives. In a less decadent era, our forefathers hoped to stop the march of history, to redirect its rushing course. In our era, history seems to have slowed to a depressing, repetitious crawl, and it might be our mission to start it moving once again.







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